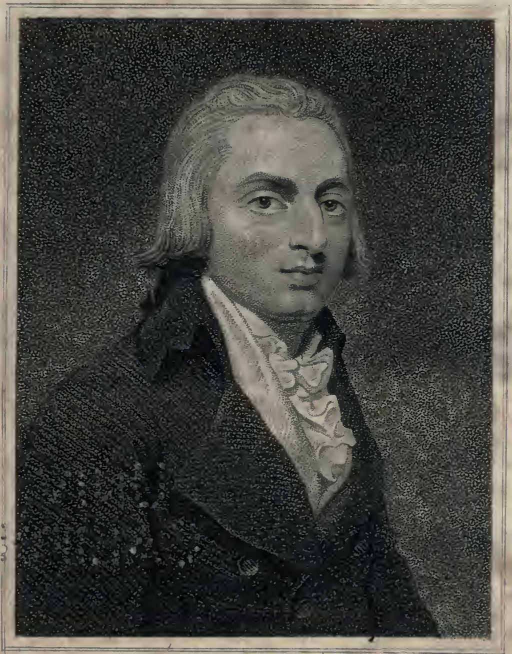

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CAPTAIN WILSON.

Published by T. Hamilton, 33, Paternoster Row, Jan.y 1st 1819.

MEMOIRS

OF

CAPTAIN

JAMES WILSON,

CONTAINING

AN ACCOUNT OF HIS ENTERPRISES AND SUFFERINGS IN INDIA, HIS CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY, HIS MISSIONARY VOYAGE TO THE SOUTH SEAS;

AND HIS

PEACEFUL AND TRIUMPHANT DEATH.

BY JOHN GRIFFIN.

THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

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FOR T. HAMILTON, 33, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

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1819

TO MRS. WILSON, THE WIDOW;

TO THE FAMILY OF THE DECEASED;

TO THE DIRECTORS OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

AND TO THE MISSIONARIES IN CONNECTION WITH IT,

ESPECIALLY THOSE IN THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDS;

THESE MEMOIRS

OF

CAPTAIN JAMES WILSON,

An early and prominent Member of a Society which has proved the Parent and Friend of numerous other noble and benevolent Institutions, both Foreign and Domestic;

AND WHICH IN UNION,

Constitute the Religious Character of the Age, form a new era of the Church, the brightest sign of the present times, and a Day-Star to the Heathen World;

ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY THEIR SINCERE FRIEND

AND BROTHER IN THE MISSIONARY CAUSE,

THE AUTHOR.

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UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

MEMOIRS

OF

CAPTAIN WILSON.

PART I.

From the early Youth of the Captain to his settling at Horndean, in Hampshire.

THE representation of truth through the medium of historic fact and biographical incident, has always proved more interesting to a very numerous class of readers, than when it is presented in an abstract and didactic form. Biography exhibits principles in operation, and shows the doctrine and its evidence in one view. The reading of it gives scope for the exercise of nearly all the powers of the soul at the same time. The imagination presents to the mind the object, place, and occurrence, as though before the eye; the understanding associates ideas, examines and traces causes

and effects, and draws its conclusions, while the passions are excited, in a degree proportioned to the interesting nature of the narrative. If its subjects be moral or religious, the conscience also is employed, and gives a point and personal application to truth, highly beneficial to the reader. Thus biography while it affords entertainment is suited to impart instruction and improve the heart.

It is from the interest the human mind feels in historic representation, that dramatic writing obtains such an extensive and almost universal popularity. The religious as well as the fashionable world, has its dramas; and fact and fiction are so blended in some books, as to render it necessary to guard our young people against supposing that all is fiction. It is neither my province nor my intention to decide on the propriety or impropriety of this mode of writing; but I may express my fears, lest there should be such a degree of it, as may introduce a levity of character into the most serious part of society, and by the number of such books, facilitate the transition from the love of religious to that of fashionable

novels. By giving too much employment to the fancy faith is embarrassed, and the understanding is weakened. Perhaps the best way to prevent a redundancy of this kind of composition, is to present the religious world with authentic narratives of real life; to exhibit facts as they occur, without the aid of an imaginary scenery to increase the interest of the representation.

If it should be thought that these remarks seem like an apology for writing the following Memoirs, I would say, it is not not denied; but they afford likewise an opportunity to assure the reader that fiction is in no instance called to aid or embellish the interesting narrative which is here presented of the life of captain James Wilson.

Dr. Haweis thought the captain's life so eventful and instructive, that he has appended a well-written, though brief account, of the early part of it, to his three volumes of Church History. This account has since been printed by some booksellers in a detached but mutilated form, and very extensively circulated through the country. The avidity with

which that tract was read, and the lively interest many have taken in the captain's life, have induced his friends to think, that a more enlarged and correct account of his conversion from deism to christianity, and from a state of unregeneracy to a state of vital godliness, is highly desirable.

I have given the part of his life previous to his conversion, with some corrections and additions, which subsequent conversations with the captain suggested, nearly in the language of his much esteemed friend. The doctor entitles his account, "Memoirs of the leadings of Divine Providence, in the call of captain James Wilson, to the work of conducting the South Sea Mission."

As the work of God in general, and the Missionary Society in particular, are so highly indebted to the noble and disinterested services of captain James Wilson, I wish to record his name among the worthies who in spreading the gospel among the heathen deserve to be held in special remembrance. The singular wisdom and prudence with which he discharged his trust, and the

uncommon success which crowned his labours through the whole of his long and perilous voyage, are a fresh manifestation of the care and keeping of that gracious Lord who had so often before, and in such a wonderful manner, led him by a way which he knew not; preserved him amidst deaths oft, and dangers so peculiar: and after bearing with him in his rebellion and insensibility, having chosen him from the beginning for himself, prepared him by a series of preceding providences for that work which he was so peculiarly qualified to fulfil.

Captain James Wilson was the youngest son of nineteen children. His father was commander of a ship in the Newcastle trade, and brought him up from his earliest years in the sea service. During the last war he served in America, and was present at the battles of Bunker's Hill and Long Island.

On his return from America he obtained a birth as mate of an East Indiaman, being, though young, an able navigator. After arriving in safety at Bengal, he quitted his ship, and determined to abide in that country. There

he became engaged in the country service, and in one of these voyages Mr. Cabel, the marine paymaster, sailing with him from Madras to Calcutta, was so much pleased with his conduct, as to commence the most cordial friendship with him; and soon after their arrival in Bengal sent him in a small vessel to the Nicobar Islands, with dispatches for the ships returning from the east, to advise them of the arrival of the French squadron, under Suffrein, on the coast, and to put them on their guard. The ship he commanded was ill-found, and in the voyage her stern-post grew so loose as to admit so much water, that with difficulty she was prevented from foundering. He was therefore obliged to run for Madras, and off Pulicat discovered the French fleet going down the coast; he expected them to chase, and pressed with all sail for the shore, where a dangerous shoal probably prevented pursuit and capture; but the ship was so leaky, he was obliged to run her on the beach to save their lives. He proceeded thence to Madras, just at the critical moment when the settlement was in the greatest distress.

Sir Eyre Coote had marched to the south, and was so surrounded by Hyder Ally's army, that no supplies could reach him by land; and the French squadron anchoring at Pondicherry had cut off all supplies by sea; so that the British troops were reduced to great difficulties, and in danger of famine, their stores being nearly exhausted.

Several Pia ships had been loaded with rice at Madras; but as the French fleet lay directly in the way, they dared not attempt the passage to Cuddalore, near which sir Eyre Coote was encamped. The governor of Madras, Mr. Smith, had heard of Mr. Wilson, and though a young man sent for him, and enquired if he would attempt to carry down the ships with the supplies for the camp, stating the danger and hazard of the run, and offering him four hundred pagodas for the service, and more if he should be detained beyond a fortnight. The captain undertook to attempt the passage, and immediately made preparations for his departure. The vessel in which he embarked was about five hundred tons burden, with three others under his com-

mand, all navigated by black men, himself being the only European, except an officer, who went down as passenger to the army. He pushed on as far as Sadras, about sixteen leagues, where he took refuge under the Dutch flag, and dispatched two hircarrahs to sir Eyre Coote, to inform him of his approach, and to expect his orders; but the roads were all so obstructed by Hyder's horse, that, to avoid the marauding army, the hircarrahs were obliged to take a great circuit; and as they ventured to travel only by night, they were eleven days before they returned. They brought from the general the most urgent orders to proceed, at all hazards, and without a moment's delay; adding, that if the captain brought only one vessel, and lost the rest, it would be of the most essential service. He accordingly immediately weighed anchor, proceeding at such a distance from Pondicherry as to see from the mast-head the French flag, and if possible, to pass the fleet in the night undiscovered. The French fleet that very evening weighed anchor, occasioned by a singular circumstance, which was

afterwards known. Suffrein had sent his water casks on shore to be filled, and they lay on the beach. Sir Eyre Coote had detached a corps of grenadiers and light infantry, who entered Pondicherry, which was open on the land side since the fortifications had been demolished; they found and staved all the casks, destroying them entirely; and this induced Suffrein to run down to Point de Gall to repair the loss, just at the moment when captain Wilson was passing in the offing. As Suffrein's ships sailed so much better than his, they were off Cuddalore in the morning, and captain Wilson arrived in the afternoon; thus providentially escaping, and bringing in the whole of the cargoes entrusted to his care, and so much wanted by the army. They had then been reduced to their last forty-five bags of paddy, and not a grain of rice to be procured. This supply rescued them from the impending famine, or the necessity of cutting their way through the enemy; and under God was the means, as all acknowledged, of the preservation of the army and of the Carnatic. Captain Wilson had some stores of his own, which were greedily

seized and devoured as soon as landed. The next day he was invited to dine with the general and his staff, was placed at sir Eyre Coote's right hand, and received the most cordial acknowledgments for his services. He informed the company of the seizure of his stores; they bid him prepare an account of them, and gave him a pagoda for every bottle of wine, and for the rest in proportion, so that this successful trip produced him about a thousand pounds, and a testimony of sir Eyre Coote's high satisfaction in the services which he had performed.

Returning to Bengal, he continued to be employed in carrying down supplies; but as these voyages include nothing interesting, I shall only note his unfortunate capture by the French, when he was going with a very valuable cargo of military stores for sir Edward Hughes, whose ammunition had been exhausted in the well known conflict with Suffrein. He was carried into Cuddalore, which had been taken by the French, and there he found the crew of the Hannibal in the same captivity. He was permitted with other officers to be at large on his pa-

role, and hoped shortly to be exchanged.

Hyder had at that time overrun and wasted great part of the Carnatic; and in conjunction with the French, after taking Cuddalore, hoped to expel the English from all that territory. He had lately defeated colonel Baily's detachment, and made them prisoners, and used every effort to get as many of the English as possible into his power, in order either to tempt them into his service, or to gratify his brutality by exposing them to a lingering death. He had bribed Suffrein with three hundred thousand rupees to surrender up to him all his prisoners at Cuddalore; and the order being communicated to the commander of the fort, nothing could exceed the indignation and grief which he and his officers testified at such an infamous bargain. However as he dared not disobey the orders of his superior, he informed the gentlemen on parole of the transaction, and his necessity of delivering them up the next day to the escort appointed to carry them to Seringapatam.

Captain Wilson no sooner received the

intelligence than he determined that very night, if possible, to attempt his escape from a captivity which appeared to him worse than death. He had observed, as he walked the ramparts, the possibility of dropping down into the river; and though he neither knew the height of the wall, nor the width of the rivers which were to be crossed, before he could reach a neutral settlement, he determined to seize the moment of delay, and risk the consequences, whatever danger or difficulty might be in the way.'

He communicated his resolution to a brother officer and a Bengalese boy, his servant, who both resolved to accompany him in his flight. It was concerted between them to meet on the ramparts just before the guard was set, as it grew dark, and silently drop down from the battlement. Before the hour appointed his companion's heart failed him. About seven o'clock he, with his boy Toby, softly ascended the rampart unperceived, and the captain leaping down, uncertain of the depth, pitched on his feet; but the shock of so great a descent, about forty feet, made his chin strike against

his knees, and tumbled him headlong into the river, which ran at the foot of the wall, and he dreaded lest the noise of the dash into the water would discover him. He recovered himself, however, as soon as possible, and returning to the foot of the wall, where there was a dry bank, bid the boy drop down, and caught him safe in his arms.

All that part of the Tanjore country is low, and intersected with a number of rivers branching off from the great Coleroon: these must all be necessarily crossed. He enquired therefore of the boy if he could swim, but found he could not. This was very embarrassing; but he resolved, if possible, not to leave him behind, and therefore took him on his back, being an excellent swimmer, and carried him over. They pushed towards Porto Nuovo, about four leagues and a half from Cuddalore. They had passed three arms of the river, and advanced at as great a pace as they possibly could to make use of the night, since their hope of safety depended chiefly on the distance they could reach before the morning light. Not far from Porto Nuovo a sea-

poy centry challenged, Who goes there? on which they shrunk back and concealed themselves, turning down to the river side. The river in that place was very wide, and being near the sea, the tide ran in with great rapidity. He took however the boy on his back, as he had done before, and bid him be sure to hold only by his hands, and cast his legs behind him; but, when they came into the breakers the boy was frightened, and clung around the captain with his legs so fast as almost to sink him. With difficulty he struggled with the waves, and turning back to the shore, found they must inevitably perish together if they thus attempted to proceed. Therefore, setting the boy safe on land, he bid him go back to Dr. Mein, who would take care of him, but the poor lad has never since been heard of, though the most diligent enquiries were made after him. As delay was death to him, he plunged again into the stream, and buffeting the waves, pushed for the opposite shore, but he found the tide running upwards so strong, that in spite of all his efforts he was carried along with the current, and

constrained at a considerable distance to return to the same side of the river. Providentially at the place where he landed, he discovered by the moon-light, dry on the beach, a canoe, which he immediately seized, and was drawing it down to the river, when two black men rushed upon him, and demanded whither he was going with that boat. He seized the outrigger of the canoe as his only weapon of defence against the paddles which they had secured, and told them he had lost his way, had urgent business to Tranquebar, and thither he must and would go; and launching with all his remaining strength the canoe into the river, the good-natured Indians laid down their paddles on the shafts, and whilst he stood in the stern, rowed him to the opposite shore. He returned them many thanks, having nothing else to give them, and leaping on the beach, immediately pushed forward with all his might. He found he had as great a distance to pass to the Coleroon as he had already travelled, and therefore continued his course with full speed, the moon shining bright; and before break of day reached

this largest arm of the river, of which those which he had crossed were branches. Exhausted with the fatigue he had undergone, and dismayed with the width of this mighty stream, he stood for a moment hesitating on the brink; but the approach of morning, and the danger behind him being so urgent, he stretched out his arms to the flood, and pressed for the shore. How long he was in crossing he could not ascertain, for somewhat near the centre of the river he came in contact with a mast of a ship, or a great tree, floating with the stream; on this he reclined his hands and his head, in which perilous position he thought he must have slept by the way, from some confused remembrance as of a person awaking from a state of insensibility, which he supposed had lasted half an hour at least. However, with the light of the morning he had reached the land, and flattered himself that all his dangers were past and his liberty secured; when, after passing a jungle which led to the sea side, he ascended a sand-bank to look around him; there, to his terror and surprise, he perceived a party of Hyder's

horse scouring the coast, and being discovered by them they galloped up to him; in a moment seized him and stripped him naked, unable to fly or resist, and tying his hands behind his back, fastened a rope to them, and thus drove him before them to the head quarters, several miles distant, under a burning sun, and covered with blisters. He supposes he must have gone that night and day more than forty miles, besides all the rivers he had crossed. But to what efforts will not the hope of life and liberty prompt? What sufferings and dangers will not men brave to secure them? Yet these were but the beginning of his sorrows.

The officer at the head quarters was a Mahometan, one of Hyder's chieftains. He interrogated the poor prisoner sharply, who he was, whence he came, and whither going? Mr. Wilson gave him an ingenuous account of his escape from Cuddalore, and the reasons for it, with all the circumstances attending his flight. The Moorman with wrath looked at him, and said *Jute bat*—"that is a lie," as no man ever yet passed the Coleroon by

swimming; for if he had but dipped the tip of his fingers in it, the alligators would have seized him. The captain assured him the truth was so, and gave him such indubitable evidence of the fact, that he could no longer doubt the relations; when, lifting up both his hands, he cried out, *Gouda ka Adami!* "this is God's man." So Caiaphas prophesied. He was indeed God's man. The Lord had marked him for his own, though as yet he knew him not.

He was immediately marched back, naked and blistered all over, to the former house of his prison, and in aggravated punishment for his flight Hyder refused him permission to join his fellow officers, his former companions, and thrust him into a dungeon among the meanest captives. Chained to a common soldier, he was next day led out, almost famished, and nearly naked, to march on foot to Seringapatam, in that burning climate, about 500 miles distant. The officers beheld his forlorn condition with great concern, unable to procure him any redress; but they endeavoured to alleviate his misery by supplying him

with immediate necessaries. One gave him a shirt, another a waistcoat, another stockings and shoes, so that he was once more covered and equipped for his toilsome journey. But the brutes, his conductors, had no sooner marched him off to the first halting place, than they again stripped him to the skin, and left him only a sorry rag to wrap round his middle.

In this wretched state, chained to another fellow sufferer, under a vertical sun, with a scanty provision of rice only, he had to travel naked and barefoot, five hundred miles, insulted by the brutes who goaded him on all the day, and at night thrust him into a damp unwholesome prison, crowded with other miserable objects.

On their way they were brought into Hyder's presence, and strongly urged to enlist in his service, and profess his religion, and thus obtain their liberty: to induce them to which, these horrible severities were inflicted on them, and to escape these, at any rate, some of the poor creatures consented. But the captain rejected these offers with disdain;

and, though a stranger to a nobler principle, and destitute of all religion, so great a sense of honour impressed him, that he resolved to prefer death, with all its horrors, to desertion and Mahomedism. In various villages through which they passed, in their long march, he was placed under cover, and exhibited to the country people as an object of curiosity, many of them never having seen a white man before. There he was forced to present himself in all possible positions, and to display all the antics of which he was capable, that his conductors might obtain money from these poor villagers, at the expense of their captive.

In consequence of the dreadful nature of this march, exposed by day to the heat, and cooped up in a damp prison by night, without clothes, and almost without food, covered with sores, and the irons entering into his flesh, he was, in addition to all the rest of his sufferings, attacked with the flux; and how he arrived at Seringapatam alive, so weakened with disease, is wonderful. Yet greater miseries awaited him there; naked, diseased, and half starved, he was thrust into a noisome prison,

destitute of food and medicine, with one hundred and fifty-three fellow sufferers, chiefly Highlanders of colonel Macleod's regiment, men of remarkable size and vigour. The very irons which colonel Baily had worn, weighing thirty-two pounds, were fastened on him; and this peculiar rigour he was informed was the punishment for his daring to attempt an escape, as well as for his resolute rejection of all the tempting offers made him. The other officers were at large; and among them was general sir David Baird, so lately the avenger of their wrongs, when he stormed this very city. Poor Wilson was imprisoned with the common soldiers, and chained to one of them night and day.

It is hardly possible to express the scenes of unvaried misery that for two and twenty months he suffered in this horrible place. The prison was a square, round the walls of which was a kind of barrack for the guard. In the middle was a covered place open on all sides, exposed to the wind and rain. There, without any bed but the earth, or covering but the rags wrapped around him, he

was chained to a fellow sufferer, and often so cold, that they have dug a hole in the earth, and buried themselves in it, as some defence from the chilling blasts of the night. Their whole allowance was only a pound of rice a day per man, and one rupee for forty days, or one piece a day, less than a penny, to provide salt and firing to cook their rice. It will hardly be believed, that it was among their eager employments to collect the white ants which pestered them in the prison, and fry them, to procure a spoonful or two of their buttery substance. A state of raging hunger was never appeased by an allowance scarcely able to maintain life; and the rice, so full of stones, that he could not chew, but must swallow it; and often (he said) he was afraid to trust his own fingers in his mouth lest he should be tempted to bite them. Their rice was brought in a large bowl, containing the portion of a given number; but that none might take more than his share, they provided themselves with a small piece of wood rudely formed into a spoon, which no one was suffered to use but in his turn; and such was the

keenness of hunger and his eagerness to obtain the food, that his jaws often snapped the spoon by an involuntary motion, as though forced together by a spring.

The noble and athletic Highlanders were among the first victims. The flux and dropsy daily diminished their numbers. Often was the dead corpse unchained from his arm in the morning, that another living sufferer might take its place, and fall by the same disease! How his constitution could endure such suffering is astonishing. Yet he had recovered from the flux which he carried into the prison, and for a year maintained a state of health beyond his fellows. At last, worn down with misery, cold, hunger, and nakedness, he was attacked with the usual symptoms of the disorder which had carried off so many others. His body was enormously distended, his thighs were as big as his waist was before, and his face was exceedingly bloated. Death seemed to have seized him for his prey, but his heart was still insensible as the nether millstone. God was not in all his thoughts, and his conscience cauterized

as if made stupid by his sufferings; he was dying as the beast which perisheth. No humiliation, no prayer, no sense of sin, no recourse to a pardoning God, no care about an eternal world, he lay occupied only with the desire of life, and hope of recovery. How he survived such accumulated misery, exhausted with famine and disease, the unwholesome vapours of a prison thickening around him, and the iron entering into his flesh, is next to a miracle: but the days of man are numbered. He is immortal even in the regions of the shadow of death, till his appointed time shall come.

Reduced now to the extremity of weakness, his chains too strait to be endured, and threatening mortification, he seemed to have reached the moment of his dissolution! The soldier to whom he had been last chained, had served him with great affection, whilst others who had been linked together often quarrelled, and rendered mad by their sufferings, blasphemed and aggravated each others' miseries. Seeing him thus, to appearance, near his end, and thinking it might alleviate his pain, his servant entreated

he might spend for oil the daily price, about three farthings paid them, and anoint his legs, but the captain objected, as he should have nothing to buy firing and salt, with which to cook the next day's provisions. Sam shook his head, and said, " Master, before that I fear you will be dead, and never want it." But who can tell what a day will bring forth? He had exchanged his allowance of rice that day for a small species of gram, called ratche pier, which he eagerly devoured, and being very thirsty he drank the liquor in which it was boiled, and this produced such an amazing effect, that in the course of a few hours his legs and thighs, and body, from being ready to burst, were reduced to a skeleton; and, though greatly weakened, he was completely relieved, and afterwards recommended the trial with great success to many of his fellow prisoners. Remedies are always near when God designs they should be so, and always efficacious when Omnipotence applies them! His irons were now replaced by others less heavy; and being mere skin and bones, they would slip over

his knees, and leave his legs at liberty.

The ravages of death had now thinned their ranks, and few remained the living monuments of Hyder Ally's cruelty and malignity; nor would these probably have conflicted with their miseries many more months or days, but the victories of sir Eyre Coote happily humbled this monster, and compelled him reluctantly to submit, as one of the conditions of peace, to the release of all the British captives. With these glad tidings, after they had spent twenty-two months on the verge of the grave, Mr. Law, son of the Bishop of Carlisle, arrived at Seringapatam, and to him the prison doors flew open; but what a scene presented himself? Emaciated, naked, covered with ulcers, more than half starved, only thirty-two remained out of one hundred and fifty-three brave men, to tell the dismal tale of the sufferings of their prison house.

Their humane and compassionate deliverer immediately provided them with clothes, dressings for their wounds, and food for their hunger: but now their mer-

cies threatened to be more fatal to them than even ~~than~~ their miseries. Their ravenous appetite could not be restrained; and though cautioned and warned against any excess, they devoured the meat provided for them with such keen avidity, that their stomachs, long unaccustomed to animal food, were incapable of digestion. Captain Wilson was one of the number who could not bridle his cravings. A large piece of beef was assigned to him, the greater part of which he devoured with a voracious appetite, and the other part he placed under his pillow, with an intention to eat it the first moment he should awake; but the sad effects immediately followed. He was seized that night with a violent fever, became delirious, and for a fortnight his life was despaired of. In his prison, under sufferings, more than human nature seemed capable of enduring, he had struggled through, and for the most part enjoyed a state of health and strength; but now, in the moment of liberty, joy, and abundance, he received a stroke more severe than any he had before undergone. How little can we determine

of the good or evil before us under the sun! He was a more wretched being surrounded by kind friends and every humane attention, than he had been when destitute, famished, covered with sores, and lying naked on the floor of a dungeon. But he who is the Lord of life and glory had determined that he should not thus perish. When all human help had failed, the great physician who has the balm to heal the desperate, rebuked the fever, restored his understanding, and raised him up once more from the dust of death; the eternal Source of mercy would not cut him off in the impenitence and hardness of his heart; he had grace in store for him, and work prepared when the set time should come, and such work as was the farthest from every idea he had yet entertained. He was for this continued the living to praise him, but at that time mercies had no more effect than miseries. His heart was yet hardened, and he knew not the hand that healed him. The day of salvation was not yet arrived, nor the period of his chastisement closed. He returned to life and health with all the

same corrupt propensities, the same unrenewed heart, the same forgetfulness of God and contempt of his word and commandments. No sufferings, not those of hell itself, says Dr. Haweis, can produce a salutary change; a sinner would come out of those flames the same as he entered them, unless the Spirit of love and power changed the heart of stone into a heart of flesh, and melted the obdurate into godly sorrow, working repentance unto salvation never to be repented of.

The captain often mentioned a remarkable instance of ingratitude, which used while he was in India to sting him to the heart. A gentlemen of very large property fell overboard in Bengal river, under such circumstances as that he must inevitably have been drowned, had not Mr. Wilson, then a very young man, plunged into the stream, and rescued him from the jaws of death. Although he must have known that Mr. Wilson had saved his life at the imminent risk of his own, not only from the almost unparelleled rapidity of the current, but from the number of sharks and alligators in

in the river, and though there were various methods by which he could have essentially served this young man for his prompt and generous conduct, yet he never expressed his gratitude by any one act of generosity towards his deliverer. Captain Wilson knew well how to moralize on this base ingratitude, as being a crime not only against him but against society, as it tended by its influence to check the benevolent heroism by which life is often saved. Yet he never, till after he knew and felt the power of the gospel, reflected on the vile ingratitude of his own heart, towards Him who had so often and so remarkably delivered him by his kind providences when on the brink of death.

Being now restored, and capable of accompanying his countrymen, he descended the Gauts, and proceeded on to Madras. Lord Macartney had forwarded a supply of clothes to meet them, but there not being a sufficiency for all, some had one thing and some another; to captain Wilson's share a very large military hat fell, which, with a banian and pantaloons, with many a breach in

them, made his meagre figure very much resemble a maniac. Impatient to revisit his friends, he walked on from the last halting place, and the centries hardly would let him pass. He hastened to a friend whose name was Ellis, enquired of the servants for their master and mistress. The footman stared at him, and said they were not at home, and were shutting the door against him, when he pressed in, rushed by them, and threw himself down on a sofa. The servants were Mahometans, who hold the insane in much reverence, and such they supposed him; and without any violence used to remove him, Captain Wilson was permitted quietly to repose himself, and being tired he fell into the most profound sleep, in which state his friends on their return found him, and hardly recognized him, he was so altered. They left him thus sound asleep till the evening, when the lustres were lighted, and several friends assembled, curious to hear the story of his miserable captivity. When he awoke, and saw the glare of light and the persons around him, he could scarcely recover his recollection,

and for a moment seemed as if he had dropped into some enchanted abode. The welcome and kind treatment of his friends, who supplied all his wants, soon restored him to his former life and spirits, and he began to think of new service, as he had yet obtained but a scanty provision, which his long captivity had not much encreased, though he received the arrears of his pay. He accordingly shipped himself as first mate of the Intelligence, captain Pennington, for Bencoolen and Batavia. In his passage they were surrounded with water spouts, one of which was very near, and they fired to disperse it. The roaring was tremendous, and presently a torrent poured on the ship, which brought down with it many fish and sea-weeds, yet the water was perfectly fresh, a phenomenon singularly curious.

During this voyage the white ants and cock-roaches, with other insects, multiplied in the most prodigious manner, so that it was resolved to run the ship down from Bencoolen to Puley Bay, and lay her completely under water to get rid of the vermin. After a fortnight

they pumped her dry, and the quantity destroyed of these creatures, with centipedes, three or four inches long, was incredible. Bencoolen was a most unhealthy place but Puley Bay is the region of the shadow of death; thence none escape without the putrid fever. Perhaps the wetness of the ship added not a little to the cause of mortality. Before they left the bay every man of the crew who was an European, except captain Wilson, died. Captain Pennington came down well on Christmas day, and only dined on board, and returned the same night; the very next day he sickened and died. A recruit of black men was sent from Bencoolen to navigate the vessel. The very day they sailed out of the harbour, captain Wilson, who had hitherto resisisted the intemperature of the climate, and then commanded the vessel, was attacked with a fever. One Swede yet remained. He had always accounted for the death of his companions, and imputed it to their imprudence. He had confidence he should escape. He was then at the helm going out of the harbour. The captain, though ill, kept the deck, ob-

served the ship very badly steered, and called out. The Swede quitted the helm, and sat down on the hen-coops. The captain himself ran to the wheel to rectify the course, storming at the man who had left the helm. He made no reply; but how great was his surprise when on going up to him he found him a corpse. The ship however visited Batavia, and arrived in Bengal; and though his health continued to suffer, the captain made a very profitable voyage.

During a year and a half he had repeated and dangerous relapses, and more than once approached the gates of death. He continued however to improve his fortune, and became himself a sharer in the vessel as well as commander.

It is worthy of remark how much the most important circumstances of captain Wilson's life turned upon apparently trivial occurrences. The last events attending his mercantile engagements were such as show the controul of Providence over us and our affairs, by a hand which we cannot see. The captain was lying at anchor in port, with his vessel freighted and ready for sea, where he and many

others had been for some time wind-bound. Being on shore spending the evening with a number of the merchants and captains of the vessels in the harbour, he met with something which greatly displeased him; he silently withdrew from the company, and instead of sleeping on shore as others did, and as he intended to have done, he called a boat, and went to his ship, designing to sleep on board, but soon after he was there, about midnight, the wind shifted nearly to the opposite point of the compass. He immediately weighed anchor and sailed out of the harbour, and had the advantage of a fair wind, and sufficient time to get down the river and get a good offing. Before the other ships could get out of the river the wind resumed its position, and forced them back to their former anchorage, and though directly foul to those in port, was tolerably fair for Wilson. When he reached the port to which he was destined, the markets were much in want of the articles with which his ship was freighted, and there being no merchant to share the market with him, he obtained his own price for the greater part of his

goods. For the same reason the articles with which he freighted his vessel back were cheap. With them he returned to the port whence he first sailed, after a month's absence, and found the vessels wind-bound as before. Here also he obtained a ready and advantageous sale for his goods; some congratulated, whilst others envied him, but all united in saying that Wilson was a fortunate man. By the double advantages of this favourable voyage, with what he had gained before, he obtained a sufficient sum to induce him to retire from business, and from the toils and dangers of the sea, he resolved therefore to return to England, sit down content with what he had, and endeavour to recover his health and enjoy himself.

With this view he embarked as passenger in the same ship in which that good man Mr. Thomas, one of the Baptist missionaries, was returning from Bengal to England. With him he had frequent disputes about religion, and being as infidel in principle as careless in conduct, he could not but grieve this minister, who observed one day to the

chief mate, that he should have much more hope of converting the Lascars to christianity than captain Wilson; so deeply mysterious are the ways of Providence! The things impossible to man are possible with God; but the time was not yet.

Being safe arrived at Portsmouth he looked around him for an agreeable abode; and having soon discovered such an one at Horndean, in Hampshire, he purchased it, and determined to set down contented with the very moderate fortune which he had brought from India, and amuse himself with gardening and the sports of the country. Being unmarried, he considered of a proper person to have the conduct of his house and family. He had a sensible and agreeable niece, whom he particularly desired to take this care upon her; she was a truly religious woman, and when pressed by him to come and live with him, she informed him of her sentiments, and her wish to attend the worship of God at the congregation of Portsea, to which she belonged. He very carelessly observed, that to him this would be no objection, he should

not disturb her about her religion; and provided she did trouble him with it, he should leave her to herself.

About two years he continued to live at Horndean, in the same careless unconcern about eternal things, yet decent in his conduct and perfectly sober, amused with his garden, the sports, and company around him, but an utter stranger to the principles of the gospel, and unacquainted with the power of them.

PART II.

From his conversion to Christianity to his becoming the Captain of the Missionary ship, Duff.

THE methods of Providence are inscrutable, but while they are directed by wisdom, they are characterized by benevolence. It was a merciful event for Captain Wilson that the mind of his niece had been enlightened and imbued with the spirit of truth previous to his return from India. This was to her a situation of many comforts, but as Horndean was ten miles from the place of worship she used to attend, and where she had received her first serious impressions, she felt it a great disadvantage to be deprived of the public ordinances of God's house, and this made her appear to him as though not happy. He was also associated with the fashionable persons in the neighbourhood, whose conversation and habits were not congenial to her state of mind: he perceived this, and though he never made it the source

of uneasiness to her, yet it rather marred his pleasures, and excited his surprise, that what he then considered as innocent amusements and gaities could afford her no pleasure. Her predilections, love of religious books, anxiety for divine worship, and evident solicitude for his spiritual welfare, had a preparatory influence on his mind; he pitied her weakness, as he considered it, but admired her integrity; he perceived that she had her felicities, though they were not from his paradise.

The operations of Providence, like those of nature, are often most interesting in their minutest parts, though not most observable. We see the hand of Deity in a thunder storm—but are unmindful of his influence in the dew of the morning. But what is true of the naturalist is equally true of the judicious moralist and divine; the parts least noticed by the common eye are those which most excite his investigation and astonishment. The most momentous events of our lives often originate from those we consider the most trivial and accidental. This sentiment is represented to us by Pro-

vidence counting the hairs of our head, and directing the falling of the sparrow to the earth.

Captain Sims, a gentleman who had, for some years, retired from the active duties of his profession upon a respectable competency, resided near to Captain Wilson. The habits of good neighbourhood soon brought them into a friendly acquaintance. Captain Sims had for many years, for he was then in an advanced period of life, professed a zealous attachment to the principles of vital religion, and regularly attended divine worship on the Sabbath at Orange Street chapel, Portsea. He had frequently introduced the subject of religion to his friend Captain Wilson; but he was better acquainted with the interior of religion than qualified to defend its outworks. The Indian captain proudly defied the artillery of his heavy denunciations against unbelievers, and smiled at his entreating him to abandon the standard under which he had so long fought, and to join affinity and allegiance with him. Captain Sims had realized the truth of that scripture, "he that believeth hath the witness in

himself;" and having this in a good degree, he had employed his mind about the general evidence of a divine revelation too little to meet the sceptical reasonings of his infidel neighbour. He cited scripture to prove that the captain's principles were wrong, and the other required evidence that the scriptures were right; and when he replied, Because they are the word of God, he smiled at his medium of proof, and felt himself at rest in the centre, while his friend was moving in a circle of argument. This may serve to show that though it may not be equally necessary for all christians to be deeply skilled in the defence of christianity against the deists, it is very necessary for all connected with the learned, polite, and military professions, among which classes the reading and thinking deists are to be found, to be well acquainted with the evidences in favour of a divine revelation, and to be tolerably skilled in the methods of argument. Our language abounds with excellent treatises on this subject, which may be recommended with great propriety, yet, as in military science, though the books of

principles and technical arrangements are absolutely necessary, it will greatly depend upon the skill of the engineer to combine and to apply his principles to the immediate circumstances of the case, in order to insure the success of an enterprise;—so the christian disputant will often find greater advantage by knowing well how to place his arguments in proof of christianity, in the light most obvious to the person with whom he is conversing, than by leaving the subject to the force of written arguments. Books cannot answer questions as they arise, nor shape the replies according to the innumerable variations of the subject in dispute. Captain Sims, conscious of his incapacity to defend the outworks of Christianity against the spirited attacks of the Indian captain, retired to the citadel, and referred the contest to more skilful combatants. "The Christian Officers' Panoply" now entitled "The Christian Officer's complete Armour," a dialogue between a captain and a major on the evidences of revelation, written by that excellent man, the late general Burn, was recommended to captain Wilson by

his friend. The captain looked at the title, but finding it related to the defence of christianity, after keeping it some weeks returned it, not having read a single page. His friend asked him what he thought of the book; his jocose reply gave him to understand that he thought the major had the best of the argument; meaning that the deist personated by the major had the advantage of the christian, represented by the captain. This so completely foiled captain Sims that he admitted of a parley, and gave up the contest. The fact was, captain Wilson had no desire for investigation, and preferred to have his mind kept in a state of easy indifference rather than to be agitated by the important and rousing subjects of revelation. He had obtained an easy competency, was about the age of thirty-six, possessed a cheerful mind, and a constitution unsubdued by an eastern climate. He was accustomed to company, and what worldly men call the cheerful habits of a man of fashion. His design was formed in India of returning to his native country, according to the common phraseology, and as he ex-

pressed it, to enjoy himself; it was therefore too soon for him to have his mind disturbed by considerations about the moral government of the divine Being, a state of future retribution, and the method of acceptance with God. His mind was elated by recent prosperity, contrasted with a former train of most unparalleled misfortunes and inexpressible sufferings. His heart was not softened by personal affliction, nor broken by adversity; like the rich man in sacred history he said to his soul, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for thou hast goods laid up for many years." His mind was made callous by some years residence in India, that school of deism, that temple of vice, where Asiatic idolatry and European infidelity unite their baleful influence to obliterate a sense of the government of God from the human mind, and to transform the man into a systematic rebel against his Maker. His mind was also deeply entrenched in his self-complacent admiration of his own goodness; he considered that he had so conducted himself in Indostan as to merit the congratulations of his own mind, and to secure the

righteous approbation of the Deity. He had behaved toward some connexions he had formed in India in such a manner as induced him to glory in his own righteousness, and when compared with many of his countrymen in that part of the world he considered that he ought to be celebrated as a man of exalted virtue rather than to be regarded as a sinner.—Besides all this he was under the influence of another, often fatal, mistake, as it is a serious preventive to reflection and conviction; his many near escapes from death, the rapid success attending his mercantile engagements after being stripped of all he possessed, and the conscious integrity and goodness of his own heart, led him proudly to imagine that he was a high favourite of the Deity. He had not sufficiently considered that many of the greatest and most cruel tyrants of the earth have often been wonderfully preserved amidst the most perilous circumstances, and extensively prosperous in the most unjust and oppressive enterprises, and therefore his mode of reasoning was very inconclusive. Such, however, was his state of mind that it would

be difficult to conceive of one more unlikely to be engaged by the subjects of revelation. There were numerous and mighty objections in his heart against receiving a book as a revelation from God, the design of which was to teach him that his heart was deeply depraved —that he had been a rebel through life against his Maker,—that he had incurred his sore displeasure, and must expect happiness in a future world solely from the unmerited mercy of him he had offended. He soon discovered these sentiments from what he heard from his niece and his friend the captain. He perceived that if christianity were from God, his plan of life was altogether wrong, his estimate of himself erroneous, and his hopes of future felicity fallacious. He saw that he must abandon the romantic scheme of happiness which he had proposed to himself, must renounce the fond opinions he had entertained of his superior goodness, and must change his worldly maxims and the connections he had formed for those which appeared to him unsatisfying and disgusting. Some transient convictions, like the flashes of

lightning which cross the way of the benighted traveller, would strike his conscience at intervals; but whatever his judgment might occasionally suggest in favour of a serious investigation of the subject, his heart rose with indignant opposition to a sentiment that was at complete variance with the system of his whole life.

It is worthy of remark that though God has often disappointed the benevolent wishes of his people in aiming to do good by some special method, he has caused the same object to be accomplished in some other way, and frequently by means which most clearly evince the superintending hand of Providence; perhaps for this reason that the instrument might not take the glory due to the efficient cause.

Captain Sims invited the young minister who officiated at the place of worship he was accustomed to attend, to spend a few days with him in the country, and captain Wilson had invited a female friend of his niece from Portsea to spend a day with him, and by a coincidence of events totally out of the sphere of any designed

arrangements, the minister's friend, captain Sims, was engaged to dine with captain Wilson on the day when his minister visited him. On this casual circumstance turned the conversion of captain Wilson to God, and the commencement of the most endeared friendship between him and the minister, which lasted for twenty years, and continued till death.

While at the table captain Sims introduced the subject of the evidences of the divine authenticity of the scriptures to captain Wilson, to which he pleasantly replied, "you know, captain, I have foiled you on that subject;" but captain Sims as pleasantly returned, "if I was not equal to the contest my minister is, and I refer the cause to him." The minister fearing that the Indian captain would suspect that he was present by some secret management of his friend, and that the way in which the subject was introduced would confirm it, and excite a prejudice in his mind, interfered rather seriously by saying to captain Wilson, "Sir, I am obliged by your polite attention to me and it is not my wish to obtrude my sentiments upon the attention of any gentle-

man: I admit the subject is of the greatest importance, and I am ready according to my abilities to defend it; yet I think it too serious to comport with the pleasant conversation of a dinner table." The captain smiled at the gravity of the young minister, and jocosely rejoined, "It will be no obtrusion of the subject upon me, I assure you, sir, I am glad of the opportunity to converse on it, for I have never met with a clergyman yet, and I have conversed with several, that I could not foil in a quarter of an hour." The minister now appealed to the company if that were not a challenge that every man of honour under the colour of his cloth was bound to meet; and turning to captain Wilson said, "Sir, it will afford me great pleasure to enter into this interesting subject with you, but I must beg a truce till we can honourably relax in our attention to the ladies at the table." This pleasantness of conversation interested the captain, disarmed his prejudices, and drew him into the debate. It was then proposed by captain Sims that he should accompany the other friends at the table to his garden and pleasure

grounds, and leave the minister and captain to an uninterrupted argument.

When the company had retired, captain Wilson proposed that the minister and he should resort to a shady bower in his garden, in one of the finest evenings that the month of July affords, and coolly debate whether the scriptures are a revelation from God. The minister cheerfully acceded, and when they had taken their seats, with great seriousness entered into the conversation, having but a little before gone through a course of reading on the evidences of Christianity. The benign influence of a declining sun, rendered salubrious and cheering by the soft breezes which gently played amidst the pliant leaves of the bower, and wafted around them the delightful odours of an extensive flower garden, and a richly variegated green-house, served to calm the spirits and to elevate the thoughts to the God of providence and universal goodness, and offered to the minister's mind a beautiful emblem of that ineffable serenity and pleasure enjoyed by the regenerated spirit, while regaling itself beneath the beams of the Sun of Righteousness,

and the soul-reviving motions of the Spirit of God. In this frame of mind, with many fervent ejaculations to the Spirit of light and influence, he prayed unto his God, and then said to the captain, "Will you, sir, propose your own mode of argument? If you will be opponent I will be respondent; or if you will be respondent I will be opponent, but let us be serious; the subject is of the greatest importance to us both, for if the scriptures do not contain a revelation from God, there are no other writings in the world that do." He at once admitted that none of the writings of the Mahometans, the Hindoos, or the Chinese, would bear a comparison of claim to divine revelation with those contained in the Old and New Testament. If then, said the minister, they do not contain a revelation there is none, and man is left to the dictates of his own judgment, for one man's reason can be no absolute rule for another man's reason; and intelligent beings are left without a standard of judgment or rule of moral science or religious hope. He acknowledged the subject was serious, and that he meant to

treat it as such, but declined a logical mode of reasoning; and said, if you can remove the principle objections to the scriptures being the word of God, I will acknowledge them and endeavour to conform my principles and conduct to them. These preliminary remarks produced an apparent seriousness, and a gentlemanlike mode of conversation during near three hours very friendly intercourse.

This conversation was recited by the minister to several of his friends, and communicated by letter to others of them, soon after it occurred, so that the relation which is here given of it is not only substantially true, but as verbally accurate as the memory was capable of retaining it, and as was suited, to meet the public eye.

It was stated by the minister that it was unphilosophical and contrary to the acknowledged methods of sound reasoning, to object to the truth of a proposition, because that truth contained some principles difficult to be comprehended. It is not the same as to say I will not believe a proposition without sufficient evidence of its truth;

but it is saying I will not believe the truth of the proposition however strong and numerous the evidences to confirm it, unless the nature of the truth contained in it is as obvious to my understanding as the strength of the evidences by which this truth is established. Such a prejudice would be a mighty barrier to the obtaining of knowledge in almost every science. There are innumerable principles in natural history, chemistry, and even in the mathematics, the truth or reality of which is proved by such incontestible evidences, that no one who is acquainted with them can for a moment refuse his assent to the truth which these evidences establish, though the truth itself contains inexplicable first principles. Voltaire's "Ignorant Philosopher" was cited as a proof; a treatise in which the philosopher traces a variety of positions through their various evidences, as far as they will carry the mind, but which leave it in some first principle not within the sphere of our present strength of intellect, when he, as to every position, becomes "The ignorant philosopher." It was also urged that such a mode of ob-

jecting would apply with equal force against deism as against christianity, for it might as strongly be urged against many positions in natural as in revealed religion. By this mode of reasoning the existence of moral evil, of the providence of God, and even of spirit as distinct from matter, and consequently a future state of being, may be denied, for each of these truths have vast difficulties connected with them, and yet many deists admit the evidences by which these truths are established. It is therefore unreasonable to object to enter into the evidences on which the truth of revelation is founded, because that truth is admitted to have difficulties connected with it. The captain was asked how he would reply to an atheist who should object to some of the first principles of his system of natural religion on the same ground ; his smile indicated that he felt himself pressed in the argument, and he said, I would not refuse to go into an investigation of the evidences in favour of revelation, but I think that if the principal objections I feel against admitting the scriptures to be the word of God were removed, the

evidences when presented in detail would be received with the greater impartiality. The minister perceived that though the captain's reason was in favour of the mode of argument proposed, his feelings did not appear to be controuled by his judgment, and that his feelings were those of habit and of long continuance, but his reason was only the flash of conviction elicited by argument, he therefore thought it best to meet his wishes and attempt to weaken his prejudices by removing his objections. This is an object worthy of consideration in all personal debates upon moral and religious subjects, for the feelings of most men are more reluctant to follow the dictates of the understanding than the understanding is to follow the dictates of truth.

The captain said the objections were so many and so great in his mind, that it appeared next to impossible that any evidences could satisfactorily prove to him that the scriptures were from God. He was requested to state the objections; and after some conversation the principal ones were reduced to the following—That the scriptures give an unlovely re-

presentation of the divine character, contrary to what appears from his conduct; that instead of removing the difficulties attending natural religion, they increased them, by requiring us to believe mysteries or truths not within the sphere of our understandings; that what is assumed as a revelation from God to the world, and as a sovereign remedy for all its intellectual errors and moral evils, had not after so many thousand years, reached one-tenth part of the inhabitants of the globe; that the magnitude of creation renders it altogether improbable that the Supreme Being has conducted himself towards the inhabitants of this comparatively insignificant spot of the universe, in the manner the scriptures represent him to have done; and that Judaism and christianity instead of being a benefit had been an injury to the world. These, said the captain, are the principal difficulties in my mind; could these be removed the minor ones would in detail have but little influence though connected with these, and in the aggregate they are very weighty.

These objections in various forms have

often been made, and as often answered in a most satisfactory manner, said the minister, but though it can hardly be expected that they can be fully discussed in the time of our conversation, I will put a few considerations before you, my dear captain, that may weaken their force, if not fully remove them.

In the first objection you say the scriptures give an unlovely representation of the Deity; but let it be remembered that a character that would be very excellent in the esteem of one man, would be unlovely in the esteem of another; a disobedient son, an indolent servant, and a criminal subject, would be very likely to think that one was subject to an unkind father, the other to a hard master, and the third to a severe judge, though in the estimation of virtuous children, servants, and subjects, they might each have an excellent character. It is affirmed by christians, that God has given us his own character, and that his creatures are in a state of rebellion against him; no wonder then if they dislike the description he has given of himself. You, sir, also admit the existence of moral

evil, now are you sure that the character you deem a lovely one is not a partial view of it, and if properly understood, would it not want what is essential to every perfect character, consistency with itself?

It is possible, replied the captain, but it appears to me to be a self-evident proposition, that goodness and munificence form the principal characteristics of the Deity, and that he loves his creatures as a good father does all his children, with an equal affection.—It is very natural for you, my good captain, said the minister, with such a comfortable residence, pleasant gardens, friends, and attentive servants, to think that munificence is the character of the Deity; but would it be as easy in your application of the term munificence, to persuade some of the slaves in Africa, and in the mines of Peru, that such is his character? You are not I perceive of the class of deists who admit the existence of the natural attributes of Deity, such as wisdom and power, but deny his moral perfections, for you say his principal feature is that of goodness, but how does this agree with his con-

duct? Had not the facts been indisputable would your system have suffered you to believe that in a world of his rational crcatures he would have permitted a few to enslave the mass, and make a trade of millions of them from generation to generation for their own benefit, and that a million of his creatures, because separated by some mountain or river, should exert the whole force of their mental and physical energies to destroy each other. I question if you will not perceive upon a closer inspection that facts are at variance with your principle; for though it is true that God is good, yet he is just and holy also, and is a sovereign in the dispensations of his will; parts of the divine character which the scriptures associate with his goodness in order to give a complete whole, and form the character of the moral governor of the world.

But said the captain I cannot reconcile with my ideas of his charhcter the account the scriptures give of the commands of God to the Israelites, with respect to the nations around them, especially their destruction of the Canaanites. These are

matters of fact, replied the minister, and as such are parts of the divine government in whatever view we contemplate them, and must be accounted for upon your principles as well as mine, and so must the African slave trade. But the difficulty of accounting for these things is greater on your system than mine, for the scriptures present us with a view of the supreme Ruler of the universe, dealing with a world of rebels in justice to make sin appear exceeding sinful, and in mercy to make his goodness appear exceeding rich, but both according to the sovereign dispensation of his own will.—But surely, rejoined the captain, it must be inconsistent with the character of God for him to refuse the worship of one of his creatures, and accept that of another because of a different mode of expressing it, as in the case of Cain and Abel; upon your system Abel seems to he emblematic of the christian, and Cain of all the world beside. What father having a number of children who should go into an extensive flower garden (pointing to that before him,) and each wishing to please the father by presenting, according to their

own taste, the most beautiful nosegay, would not look at the design instead of the comparative worth of the flowers, and manifest his pleasure to them all.

Your beautiful comparison said the minister is rather I conceive a begging of the question my good captain; you have presented to yourself and to me a father who has left his children without instruction as to what would please him. But suppose the father you have pictured should for the good of his family maintain his own authority, and require of them, as a proof of their affection and obedience, that they should present to him a nosegay composed of such flowers only as he should describe. Suppose also that some of them should take this prescribed rule, and endeavour to comform their nosegay as near to it as in their power, but others of the family should neglect this prescribed rule, presume on their own judgment, and present such a nosegay as is contrary to his will; would not the father be just in rejecting the one and receiving the other? This as a christian is my case; our Father has appointed a rule for the sentiments

of the understanding, for the dispositions of the heart, and the actions of life, and it is to this rule every one to whom it has been made known is bound studiously to conform.

Here the captain seeming to show that he felt the application of the subject, the minister's heart glowed with benevolence, and flushed with the hope of a final triumph, he said in rather plaintive accents, My dear sir, have you ever endeavoured to bring your system to bear on your own case? Are goodness, benevolence, and kindness, the principal features of the divine character? then the scriptures are the word of God. Are you absolutely certain of possessing a state of future existence? If you should, will it be to you a state mixed with pains and pleasures like the present, or of all pain, or all pleasure?—Will it be for a certain period, or for ever? Are not these questions which every one would gladly have so answered as to leave his mind at rest? May not your mind in old age, or under heavy affliction, become more anxious than it is now, and may it not become so anxious that all the other gifts

of Providence would be comparative trifles to his giving you some way of being satisfied as to these interesting personal enquiries? The minister waiting an answer, he said, Surely. His friend rejoined, Is there any way by which you can come to a certainty on these subjects? He replied, With my views there is no method of obtaining an absolute certainty. Then, replied his friend, Is this a proof of the goodness of God to leave you in a state of the most awful uncertainty on subjects so closely connected with your greatest happiness? Is this a mark of goodness to give you the dim light of reason, which like that of the glow-worm only serves to make the surrounding darkness more visible, and to refuse that light which he could give to remove your darkness? To give you a conscience capable of tormenting you without the method of having it appeased, or of knowing whether he will pardon, and if some sins, how many, and on what conditions—thus the subject will not bear looking at, the further you go the more the mind is perplexed.—What! and is this the system that is founded

upon the goodness of God? No, my dear captain, it is revelation that exhibits his goodness, here he meets the anxious mind. Life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel. Christ is the way, the truth, and the life; the meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way—Come, doctor, said the captain, you are preaching now, not reasoning.

What will you say to my other objection; the scriptures require me to believe mysteries?—I admit, replied the minister, that the scriptures contain a variety of truths which may be considered as mysterious, but they are not more so than a number of principles which are commonly received by philosophers. The term *mystery* sometimes implies a truth which was once hidden but is now revealed, but the common acceptation of the term, and the sense in which it is frequently used in the scriptures imply a principle or matter of fact made known by revelation, but which contains something in its nature, mode of existence, or degree, which lies beyond the sphere of our comprehension, and therefore called a mystery; not that the doctrine or the

matter of fact is hidden, for this would be a solecism, but that there is something connected with it which is hidden. There are innumerable truths you believe, not because you comprehend them, but because the evidences of their existence are so numerous and so strong that you cannot refuse your assent to them. You believe in animal and vegetable vitality, not because you understand what vitality is, but from its reality being so obvious to your senses that it is impossible to deny it. You believe that matter was formed out of nothing, not because you have any power of conceiving how what is can be formed out of what was not, but because knowing that matter exists you conclude that it must either have been eternal or created; and the latter, according to your philosophical sentiments, is of the two the most probable. You believe the eternity and immensity of the divine Being, but no finite mind can comprehend what is infinite; if therefore the inspired volume contains a variety of truths which lie beyond the sphere of our limited capacity it is rather an evidence of its divine authenticity than against it.

I do not believe, said the captain, what is contrary to the nature of things if I believe some truths which I do not fully comprehend. Your Bible, according to the opinion of the great majority of christians, calls upon me to believe the doctrine of the Trinity in unity, and this is so contrary to reason that I have hardly patience to attend to evidences which attempt to prove such an absurdity as that three are one, and one is three, and that the book which contains such preposterous positions is the word of God.—I have admitted, said the minister, that the scriptures contain some truths which are not explained, and therefore it would be unwise to attempt to explain what is inexplicable. But I think you must admit that none can understand the divine Being but himself, and that if it could be proved that he had revealed himself to his creatures, that they would be under obligation to believe the description he had given of himself, though they could not understand the mode of his existence. Is it not therefore too assuming to make our judgment of the divine Being a standard by which to try

the evidences of a revelation from God to man? for upon such a principle it would be impossible for the divine Being to make a revelation of himself to his creatures, supposing that there is any thing in the nature of his existence incompatible with our modes of reasoning. Besides, I question if you are quite correct when you say that you believe nothing that is contrary to the dictates of your own understanding. Do you not, suffer me to ask you, believe that God is every where present in the most strict and philosophical sense of the word? and yet do yo you not as firmly believe that there are innumerable worlds of matter in the universe, and also innumerable spirits who are distinct, intelligent, free agents? What power of reasoning is your mind endued with by which it can reconcile to itself these two opposite propositions? Can two beings, two substances, occupy exactly the same space at the same time? If you believe the other two propositions you must also believe that they can; but is not this contrary to your mode of reasoning, or as far as your perceptions go, contrary to the nature of things?—But,

said the captain, there is something in the nature of spirit, and even of space, that we do not understand.—True, my good sir, said the minister; why then prescribe a modus of being to what you do not understand, and make your reasoning a standard by which you are to determine what is the nature of the divine existence.

The doctrine of the unity of the Deity is most clearly the doctrine of the scriptures, but however it may appear to us now to be a self-evident position, yet remember how many ages it had to struggle with the reasonings of men before it obtained extensive belief, and even now how much it has to contend with in order to obtain universal reception. It was contrary to the reason of the ancients seeing there were so many opposite principles in the universe both moral and physical that there should be but one God. The belief of the plurality of deities was general through all nations; they had therefore the force of universal opinion, and the apparent unreasonableness of supposing that the opposite principles of good and evil in the universe could com-

port with the idea of there being but one God to oppose to the doctrine of Moses, the prophets, and of Christ concerning the unity of the Deity. I mention this to show how dangerous it is to make our ideas of the nature of the Divine existence a reason for refusing to examine the claims of the scriptures to be a revelation from God; for had men always acted under the influence of this principle might not the doctrine of the divine unity have been still treated as an absurdity? After waiting for an answer the minister said, What have you to reply to these considerations?—My object was not to make you a deist, returned the captain, and therefore go on.—Your third objectiou I think, said the minister, arises from revelation not having yet been made universally known.—Yes, said the captain, it appears most probable that had the scriptures been a revelation from God he would for the same reason that he made it known to some have made it known to all; for it can neither be a rule of duty, nor a remedy for misery, where it is not made known, and so far can be of no use.—It is not denied, my dear sir,

that the want of the universal diffusion of revelation is a serious evil to the world; but may not the objection you now urge have been one cause of preventing its becoming universal; if your argument is valid it never can become so, for if all men refuse to examine its claims to divine authenticity till it is universally known, it is morally impossible it should ever be received by the whole world, for the objection would present an insuperable barrier to its general reception. This is reasoning in a circle, and terminates in absurdity; it is in fact to say it ought not to be universally received till it is universally received. Besides any revelation must have claims to universal reception antecedently to its being universally received. Should news reach this country from the East Indies for instance, authenticated by the strongest evidence of its truth, and yet should every one refuse to receive it as truth till all had received it as such, is it not obvious that in such a case *no one* would receive it as truth?

But perhaps your objection supposes that if God gave a revelation of his will to man, there is something in the nature

of his character and of his moral government which would justify us in concluding that he would at the same time make the discovery to all. This, to say nothing of the impropriety of thus prescribing rules to the sovereign of the universe, and of its being unsupported by the analogy of the divine government, is extremely inconsistent in a deist, for he professes that God has given a revelation of himself in his works, and yet there were not, for many ages, as many deists at any one time as would fill a large church, the whole world being devoted to polytheism, and even now the number of deists is very small compared with the number of christians, and still smaller compared with the number of pagans. You must therefore admit either that God has written his character so illegibly in his works, that it is vastly difficult to read it, or that men have been obstinately blind to it, so that the discovery has produced no extensive good. The objection ought therefore to have no weight with you, sir, because the same would apply with more than equal force against your system from either an atheist or a pagan. I see no alternative

for you upon your own argument, but either to admit the principles of atheism or paganism, or to go calmly into the evidences of christianity. You have got to windward of me here, I confess, said the captain, but go on.

Had revelation been communicated to all men intuitively in the first instance, its universality could have been no reason for their receiving it as such, for this could not have been known to the individual at the time, and had it been so it must have been a conclusion resulting from the deduction of argument, and therefore not from intuitive knowledge; thus your objection involves a moral impossibility. Besides an attentive revelation to all seems incompatible with our state of moral agency. To answer the end of a revelation it must not only be addressed to our intellects, but to our hearts, and as such it puts the persons to whom it comes into a new state of probation. That the scriptures are not yet universally known is one evidence of the truth of some of the great principles which they contain, for they describe men as in a state of rebellion against

their Maker, not liking to retain God in their thoughts. It is not a matter of surprise that men should make objections against the divine origin of a book which contains rules to which they have no wish to be conformed, motives of action they never feel, and denunciations of judgments against sins to which they are strongly attached both by inclination and habit. Suppose a vast body of individuals had revolted from their allegiance to a rightful sovereign and from obedience to the most just and equitable laws formed for the good of the whole, and suppose that a proclamation were sent into the camp of these rebels, describing the excellence of their prince, the purity of his laws, the heinousness of their crimes, the punishments which awaited the incorrigible, and offering them pardon solely on the ground of the mercy of the sovereign, whose character, laws, and service they hated, would it not be natural to expect that such a proclamation would be treated with neglect—that its reception would be opposed, and its proffers despised. But suppose that a few should repent of their con-

duct, admire the character of him they had offended, and the laws they had broken, and should try to convince others in the camp of their folly and crimes, and persuade them to accept of mercy; what treatment might such expect while the camp was well supplied with provisions and in material difficulty? Would it not be a long time before they would obtain universal attention, and the proclamation universal reception? but would this opposition and partial reception of the proclamation be any argument either against the excellency of its principles or the authenticity of its origin? But once more, suppose that after the sovereign had patiently borne with their provocation for a long time, and had used various methods to bring them back to their allegiance, they, instead of submitting to his authority, should infer from his forbearance either that he was inattentive to their conduct, or that he approved of it, and should therefore persevere in their rebellion notwithstanding all that his proclamation contained; would it not be a part of his righteous administration to accomplish that by his

power which had not been effected by his clemency. But if, when they are brought to judgment, some of them should set up as a plea, that though they had heard of the proclamation and might have read its contents, yet as it was not universally received by the camp they had refused to enquire into its authenticity, or submit to its proposals; would not such a plea rather aggravate their criminality than extenuate it? I was going to say, my dear captain, I will leave you to make the application, but it would not become the profession I make, nor the office I sustain, were I not in friendship to make it myself; indeed I am persuaded you will not be offended with me for doing so, for it must appear to you as a species of hypocrisy in me to profess to believe the truth and importance of revelation, and not be earnestly desirous that others also should believe in its divine origin, and participate in its benefits. Does it not then become you, sir, seriously to consider that however some may plead before the tribunal of their Maker, that they have never had an opportunity to investigate the claims or the subjects of

the scriptures, *you* will not be able to make this plea. Let me therefore entreat you patiently to examine their evidences and study their contents.

Certainly, said the captain, I cannot be offended with your good wishes for me, however unnecessary I may think them, for surely it becomes the character you sustain zealously to defend and enforce the principles you think of such vast importance to the interests of men. Indeed I have often been surprised to find some of your character who profess to believe the christian religion to be a reality, act as though they thought it a fable; while some persons that I know believe it to be a fable act as though they thought it a reality. I am sorry, said the minister there are so many of the first class, and so very few of the second. But if you please I will proceed to your fourth objection, which is drawn from the extent or magnitude of creation.

It appears highly improbable, said the captain, that the inhabitants of this comparatively insignificant spot of the works of God should receive that kind of atten-

tion described in the scriptures, when the globe we inhabit probably bears a less proportion to the universe than an orange bears to the solar system. When we see that the water and the air are full of animation, and that vegetables and animals are little worlds covered with inhabitants, is it not natural to suppose that the globes which float in the boundless extent of space around us are also inhabited? And when we consider that our sun is the centre of a system, with planets like our earth, and some of them much larger, revolving round it; is it not probable that the fixed stars are suns to other systems? Besides our glasses discover other suns far beyond the sphere of our eyes; and hence could we take our standing on the most remote star that our best glasses discover in the east, and then on another, the most remote in the opposite direction in the west, it is probable others would be discovered from each of these as far beyond them as they are beyond us, and then we might be no nearer the bounds of creation than we are on this earth. Now that a Being possessed of such vast, (to us boundless

dominions,) should speak and act as though all his other works were made for the inhabitants of this little spot; and that he who made and governs all should unite himself with human nature, and die to restore men to happiness, seems so much beyond the bounds of probability that I wonder how any man of a philosophical mind can believe these things.

This objection has in my view of the subject so many weak parts, said the minister, that I know not on which to fix my attention first. I must however correct one part of your objection before I reply to the other, by observing that the scriptures no where represent that all the works of God were made for the benefit of man, nor that any of them were made exclusively for his advantage. I do not deny some of your probabilities; it may be true that the stars are suns, and these suns have planetary systems, and these systems are all inhabited, but it may be useful to remind you that these are only probabilities, and not certainties. It is from one train of probabilities that you deduce another, so that the probabilities urged against the truth of revelation are

not deductions from known facts: this to a philosopher, (that is to a man of close reasoning,) must very much weaken the objection. To probability then I would oppose probability, and thus poise your objections, or as I think turn the scale against it. The probabilities in favour of revelation to be deduced from the *minuteness* of the works of God, are I think equal both in number and weight to those which form the objection to revelation, arising from the *magnitude* of his works. When I perceive that he who has adjusted the spheres even to a grain, has regulated their motions to a second, has also adjusted the minutest parts of the animal structure, and has formed the minutest adaptation of parts and principles to the accomplishment of some design.—When I perceive the eye is adapted to light, and the ear to the vibration of the air, the lungs for respiration, the heart for pulsation, and the stomach for digestion, in short the whole animal economy adapted to the purposes of human life, and also that this adaptation is carried to the smallest fly and insect, and even to the microscopic animalcule;—

when I thus perceive the minute attention of the divine Being to the operations of matter, the probability to me is, that he is not less attentive to the operations of mind; when I perceive that all these arrangements are connected with animal or human happiness, the probability is that he who has been so kindly attentive to my body has not neglected the soul—that he who has given light for the eye has given truth for the understanding; and when I perceive that the scriptures contain principles as suited to the comfort of my mind, as food is suited to the sustenance of my body, the probability is that these truths are from God, because I feel that there is as pleasing an adaptation between these truths and my state and condition of mind as between food and hunger, light and the power of vision.

But to me the magnitude of his works suggests some probabilities in favour of revelation as well as the minuteness of them. We can only know the divine Being by his conduct. I can conceive of his power only by what he has done; and when I perceive the greatness of that

power by the number and magnitude of his works, the probability is, that He who has seen fit to display his power in creating such boundless works, and such astonishing wisdom in the management of them, would for the same reasons magnify his condescension, goodness and mercy, by some method corresponding with that by which he has displayed his wisdom and power; and where is this so fully to be seen as in those scriptures which say, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life?" Now my dear captain, I will go with you as far as my mind can reach in contemplating the magnitude of creation, because I have before me an event which fills me with as much astonishment at his loving kindness and tender mercy, as all his works fill me with astonishment at his power. Philosophy presents a magnificent display of the greatness of God, but the scriptures give us also a grand display of his goodness. In this view therefore probability is in favour of revelation.

There is another view in which the magnitude of creation suggests some probabilities in favour of christianity. In proportion as we think of the extent of the works of the divine Being, so we view the greatness of their author, and in proportion to the greatness of the Being offended is the enormity of the offence. You believe in the existence of moral evil, and does not your reason suggest that to offend such an Almighty being places you in most fearful circumstances; for what might be expected of such a Being but that he would vindicate his injured justice, and if you contemplate the greatness of his power in the magnitude of his works are not these calculated to fill the mind with terror for fear of his judgments? Your objection against the truth of the scriptures, arising from the greatness of God, might in different circumstances of the mind be turned against yourself as a two-edged sword; for were it deeply impressed with the magnitude of sin and terrified with fearful apprehensions of divine displeasure when under some heavy affliction, and in the prospect of death, your

train of probability would suggest that he is too great a Being to listen to your prayers or notice the sufferings of such an insignificant creature as man, and thus without a revelation you might be left in perplexity and shut up in despair.

In your estimate of the magnitude of creation, you seem to lose sight of the superior excellence of intelligence to that of matter. The sun and the whole system of worlds around it have no consciousness of their own existence, they know not the Being that formed them, nor for what end they were created. The inhabitants therefore of this earth, considered as intelligent creatures, are of more importance in the scale of being than all the innumerable worlds of matter God has made. Nothing about which we are conversant has its ultimate end in itself, every thing terminates in something beyond it; yet every thing in nature and every operation of matter, appears either directly or remotely to centre in the good of man. Is it probable then that infinite wisdom has left man in this world of uncertainty without a guide, that he has left him without

the means of obtaining any tolerable certainty about a future state and the favour and pardon of his Creator? When we observe an extensive range of scaffolding, is it in the order of probability that he who has erected it means to neglect the building? or when we see a person has erected a large mansion that he means to neglect his family? or would not such a fact lead us to suppose that he had done every thing necessary to shew his concern for their present and future happiness? Is not probability therefore arising from the works of God, in favour of the scriptures being a revelation from him, since they assure us of the reality of a future state, and inform us how we may escape his anger and participate his favour. But before I quit this objection it is necessary I should observe that though this train of reasoning is in favour of revelation, yet the scriptures do not rest their claim to a divine origin upon probability. Your objection opposes probability to fact, and we who defend revelation oppose facts to your probabilities; and I hope you will give the great facts on which the magni-

ficent and beautiful fabric of Christianity is built, all that serious consideration which the importance of the subject demands. Well, said the captain, your reasoning puts the subject in a more favourable light; but how do you account for it then that the principles of the scriptures have done so little good in the world and have been the cause of so much superstition, tyranny and bloodshed?

You appear, said the minister, to take these things for granted as though they were self-evident positions, but I must beg leave to deny the statement. Christianity has done vast good in the world, and has not, properly considered, been the cause of superstition, tyranny, or cruelty. It is certainly much to be lamented that men for ambitious purposes, under a mask of religion, have invented superstitious observances to divert the attention of men from their just rights, and have persecuted myriads with unrelenting severity for daring to think for themselves; but I think you will admit that this was done from political motives; and nothing can be a stronger

proof that these things cannot be fairly attributed to the principles of Christianity than the Catholics having prohibited the people from reading the scriptures. Who does not perceive that had Christianity justified their conduct they would most readily have circulated the sacred book in defence of themselves? To the New Testament, to the conduct of Christ and his apostles, and of the primitive Christians we appeal for proof of the mild and holy nature of Christianity, and boldly challenge the world to an impartial investigation whether the vile practices of the European, falsely called Christian states, can be fairly attributed to the principles or examples recorded in the New Testament. Can any thing be more opposite to their conduct than the language of Christ? "My kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight. He that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword. Bless them that curse you, do good to them that despitefully use you and persecute you, bless and curse not. I say unto you, love your enemies. If you forgive not men their trespasses, neither

will your heavenly Father forgive you." It is evident to every one that since the scriptures have been more freely circulated and more generally read, the state of society in Europe and the world is gradually increasing in amelioration. The captain said, smiling, you certainly have a happy knack of getting rid of a difficulty. When I object to the mystery of your principles you refer to your practice; and when I refer to the bad practice of the votaries of Christianity, you refer to your principles. Notwithstanding your pleasantry, my good captain, said his friend, I am persuaded however indignant you feel, and not more so than I do at the conduct of those who have disgraced the Christian name by their unjust and cruel conduct, you do not believe it is fairly to be attributed to the principles of Christianity. This however is only the negative part of the subject, but there are, I think, strong positive evidences that the gospel has proved an extensive blessing to the world. In order to see this truth in a strong light, we should contemplate the ancient state of the world where re-

velation had not reached. We should consider the inefficiency of all the events of Providence—the various and changing systems of philosophy—the numerous codes of civil and criminal laws, and the *almost infinite* modes and principles of religion, to effect any material amelioration of the state of man. We should also compare those parts of the world now where christianity has not been received, with those where it has been suffered to have its unrestrained and native influence.

Would our time admit, I hope I could prove to you from the various evidences of historic facts that christianity has been the cause of abolishing the practice of human sacrifices. There can be no reasonable doubt but that numbers of human beings were sacrificed every year, both in Britain and in various parts of the continent of Europe, as the effect of their false religion; but christianity has long since trodden down their cruel altars and thrown away their bloody knife. It has restored women to their proper station in society, and has thus tended to render one half of the inhabitants happy, and by them to soften

the manners and promote the happiness of the other half. The sacred institution of marriage has been sanctioned and guarded by the christian principles; divorce rendered difficult and unattainable but for the high crime of adultery: females and children are thus protected, and the great and depopulating vices kept in check by the laws and manners diffused from the christian code.

Slavery, that awful proof that man is a tyrant to man, that bane of human happiness, that disgrace to civilized nations, owes its abolition in Europe to the mild and equitable laws of christianity. Even in the best days of Rome, according to Gibbon, two thirds of the population of the whole empire were slaves to the other third. The cruel manner in which they were treated is written in lines of blood on the historic page of almost every province. England and every nation of the continent had its market for slaves as well as for cattle till the gospel diffused milder principles into our laws and usages. It is to the influence of christianity that we owe the

advanced state of civilization in Europe beyond the other part of the world, and where it has had the most extensive and unrestrained operation, there is the most improved and happy state of society. These, my dear sir, are known and public facts, which you can account for upon no other principles than those enforced from the christian code. Besides the happiness which the gospel has afforded to myriads of families and to millions of individuals, is such as no other religion ever has afforded or can afford.

I begin to infer from your silence, said the minister, either that you grow tired of the conversation or that you feel your objections giving way. I will relieve you from that suspicion, said the captain, for I assure you I never was more interested in a conversation in my life, and if our friends do not come to interrupt us, I shall be happy after what you have said in reply to my objections to know how you prove that the scriptures are a revelation from God: but before you do that, there is one thing more I should like to have your remarks on,

which has often occurred to me as being very unaccountable; if christianity contains a divine revelation how is it that there is such a diversity of opinions among those who believe it to be the word of God? there are as many opposite sentiments as there are pages, and almost as many sects as sentiments, and how then am I to know what is right?

Here, my dear sir, I would as before apply what is called the *argumentum ad hominem,* the objection will more fully apply to your system as a Deist than to mine; you believe in natural religion as it is called, but I question if you could find a number sufficient to make a good congregation of your own sentiments among all the Deists living; nay, I question if you do not differ among yourselves as much as we do from each other; for though you may have a few sentiments that are fixed, the far greater part are as floating and mutable as the clouds. Among all the Deists that have ever written, there are not two that have agreed upon even the outlines of the system of natural religion. But I imagine the real differences among chris-

tians are fewer than you suppose. Some of the opinions in which they differ are about such comparative trifles that they bear no proportion to the sentiments in which they agree. Revelation though it exhibits great and sublime truths, does not afford supernatural powers of intellect to preserve all who receive it from the possibility of any error, but it proposes them to the minds of men in the state in which it finds them; and when it is considered what a diversity of degrees there are in the strength of human reason, what an undetected influence the dispositions of the heart have over the decisions of the understanding, and how deep and extensive are the prejudices of education, it is not a matter of surprise that there should be differences of opinion on subjects so various and numerous as those contained in revelation. Besides it should be remembered that many who profess to believe christianity are not under the influence of its doctrines, and no wonder that their pride, evil passions, and worldly spirit, should induce such persons to explain them away. You ask how shall I know among

such a diversity of sentiments what is right? I reply, the scriptures do not lay you under obligation to be guided absolutely by the opinions of any: you are to exercise your own faculties and form your own opinion from the scriptures themselves, and they assure you the meek or the humble will He teach in judgment, and the meek will He guide in the way. Learn of me, said Christ, for I am meek and lowly, and you shall find rest to your souls. If the heart be truly under the influence of the great truths of the gospel, the judgment will not be essentially and finally wrong. I believe that no one ever examined the scriptures with a sincere desire to know the will of God, with humility of spirit, willing to receive whatever God has revealed, and with perseverance in prayer to God to be guided right, that has been finally wrong. The scriptures say every thing calculated to humble pride, but every thing suited to encourage humility. Where men agree about the spirit and temper of the gospel, and feel its influence, they readily agree to differ on subjects of minor importance.

As we cannot expect our friends to give us much more leisure I can but state the leading particulars of the evidences of revelation. The method I have proposed to myself in a recent course of reading has been to consider, first, whether deism is sufficient to answer the great purposes of religion. It is ineffectual to bring the mind, the conscience, and the heart, to a state of rest and satisfaction. It is deficient in strong and clear motives to produce a holy life, and appears obviously unequal to effect any extensive moral change in the state of man. The principles, conduct, and dying experience of the prominent deists are, for the most part, unlovely and repulsive. They treat the divine Being and all serious subjects with an irreverence and levity highly unbecoming their importance; and the manner of their death has generally been such as will bear no comparison with the death of a vast cloud of Christian witnesses for unfeigned resignation, manly fortitude, a cheerful willingness to die, and a confident expectation of future felicity. Leland's View of the Deistical Writers, and

Halyburton's Inefficacy of Natural Religion, elucidate and confirm these and various other considerations.

The next subject of investigation is the *necessity* of a revelation from God. This and the inefficacy of deism, it is admitted, are only preliminaries to the subject of enquiry, but they help the mind and predispose it to a more impartial investigation of the evidences.

The history of the heathen world sufficiently proves the absolute necessity of a revelation from God to make known the attributes and will of the Deity, and to teach the reality, and explain the nature of the divine Government. Pagans had no just views of Providence, and many of the deists deny it; the scriptures alone give us a correct and consoling view of it. Revelation is necessary to assure us of the reality of a future state, and of the resurrection of the body. It is necessary to explain whether future existence will be a state of blessedness or a state of punishment; if to some a state of blessedness, and to others a state of suffering, then what constitutes and causes the difference, or how may men escape misery and enjoy hap-

piness. It is necessary to teach us whether God will hear prayer, on what principles, and to what effect. It is necessary to give us a decisive standard of right and wrong, to describe our duty to God, to ourselves, to our relatives, and to our neighbours. It is necessary to satisfy the guilty and anxious mind whether God will pardon sins, what kind, how many, and by what evidences we may know he has pardoned our's. These are inquiries essential to the happiness of man, especially to the inquisitive mind, even during health, but more peculiarly so in the time of affliction, and of approaching dissolution. But who can get even a probable solution to these inquiries without reference to the scriptures? The most judicious heathens saw and confessed the necessity of some communication from heaven to satisfy the anxious inquiries of reflecting minds. These are considerations, my dear captain, which should come home to every man's bosom, for they may come home when he may not have strength of mind or body to entertain them. Dr. Leland's two quarto volumes on the Advantages

and Necessity of the Christian Revelation, and the Rev. Edward Ryan's History of the Effects of Religion on Mankind, will afford you ample and instructive proofs of this position.

I would also beg leave to recommend the very careful perusal of Bishop Butler's Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion, a book to which I feel myself more indebted than to any book I ever read.

The direct evidences are derived from the nature, the number, and the designs of the facts recorded in the scriptures. If the facts be true the doctrines cannot be false; for the principal doctrines rest on the principal facts, since they were such as none but Omnipotence could have effected, and they were performed for the purpose of confirming the doctrines taught by Moses and the prophets of the Old Testament, and Christ and his apostles of the New. The scripture history is sufficiently corroborated by the writings of the ancients, and the customs and manners of the Eastern nations. The critical observations of the most profound linguists, the disquisitions of those best

acquainted with Oriental literature, the modern geographical discoveries within the sphere of sacred history, together with the deepest researches into chronology, and the most accurate astronomical calculations, all unite to prove the authenticity of the scripture facts. I confess, said the captain, that since my return from India, on hearing my niece refer to some parts of the Bible, I have been forcibly struck with several things which prove that the scriptures are an Eastern book; among other things the language of one of the Psalms, where David says "Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over," most likely alludes to a custom which has continued to this day. I once had this ceremony performed on myself in the house of a great and rich Indian in the presence of a large company. The gentleman of the house poured upon my hands and arms a delightfully odoriferous perfume, put a golden cup into my hand, and poured wine into it till it ran over, assuring me at the same time that it was a great pleasure to him to receive me, and that I should find a rich supply in his house. I think the

poet expressed his sense of the divine goodness by allusion to this custom. I thank you, said his friend, for this beautiful illustration of that fine passage in the twenty-third psalm: I hope you will pursue these observations. I doubt not but various other allusions to Eastern manners will occur to you by a careful reading of the scriptures.—But to return to the matters of fact as evidences of the truth of revelation.

The rules laid down by Leslie, in his short method with the deists and the Jews, are so plain and forcible that they should never be forgotten. His object is to give such rules as to the truth of matters of fact in general, that where they all meet such matters of fact cannot be false; then to show that these rules do meet in the matters of fact of Moses and of Christ, and that they do not meet in the matters of fact of Mahomet, of the heathen deities, nor can possibly meet in any imposture whatsoever. His first rule is, that the matter of fact be such as that men's outward senses, their eyes and ears, may be judges of it—secondly, that it be done publicly in the face of the world—

thirdly, that not only public monuments be kept up in memory of it, but some outward actions be performed—fourthly, that such monuments and such actions or observances be instituted and do commence from the time that the matter of fact was done. The two first rules make it impossible for any such matter of fact to be imposed upon men at the time when such matters of fact were said to be done, because every man's senses would contradict the statement, and the two last rules render it impossible that the matter of fact should be invented and imposed upon men ages after the fact was said to be performed, because every one must know that no such public monuments had been seen, nor any observances kept in memory of such events. His rules are so admirably applied to the principal facts of the Old and New Testament that I entreat you carefully to peruse that small but incomparable treatise.

The departure of the Israelites from Egypt, the destroying of the first-born of all the Egyptians, in memory of which the passover was kept, and by the Jews still continues to be kept—the dispersion

of the Jews, and yet their continuing for so many ages a distinct people—the agreement of prophecies and historic events respecting the cities of Babylon, Nineveh, Tyre, and Jerusalem—the resurrection of Christ—the conversion of St. Paul—the gift of tongues—the institutions of baptism and the Lord's Supper—the martyrdom of the apostles—and the irresistible success of the gospel in opposition to the reasonings of the Grecian philosophers, the malignant designs of the Jews, and the systematic and persevering efforts of the Roman government; are such memorable and unparalleled facts and circumstances that it appears almost impossible for any man seriously to consider them in connection with the truths they are designed to establish, without feeling an awe upon his spirit, and a secret conviction in his mind that the scriptures are the word of God. The dispersion of the Jews, and their continuing for so many ages a distinct people, is certainly a very remarkable fact, said the captain; but there is another people as distinct as the Jews, who have frequently excited my atten-

tion; they are the Ishmaelites; nothing can be a more accurate description of them than is given:—"their hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against them." I have often had them in my service, and seen them in various situations, but no change of place, connection, or circumstances, in the least alters their character, their hand is against every man, and consequently every man's hand is against them. This, said the minister, is an ocular demonstration of nearly three thousand years continuance of the truth of scripture prophecies, and I doubt not but if you were to go further into the subject you would see increasing reason to believe and wonder. If in addition to the books before mentioned you were to read Newton on the Prophecies, Campbell on Miracles, Lardner on the Credibility of the Gospel History, West on the Resurrection of Christ, Littleton on the Conversion of St. Paul, and Paley's Horæ Paulinæ, proving the genuineness and authenticity of Paul's epistles; it appears to me that your mind would receive such a refulgency of evidence that you would as readily admit the divine authen-

ticity of the scripture as you do that light is the medium of vision, or that life is the cause of sensibility.*

Our friends, I perceive, are coming, so that we have no time to enter on the consideration of the character and agreement of the writers of the Bible, the spirit of the New Testament, or the design of the scriptures, as tending to prove them of divine origin; but before they reach us I must beg leave to remind you, my dear sir, that of all the subjects that can possibly engage our attention this is the most important. If you are right according to your sentiments, I cannot be, as to my final state, materially wrong; but if my sentiments

* Since the year 1793, from the increase of infidelity in this country, owing to the spread of the French philosophy, and the circulation of Paine's Age of Reason, there have been a number of books written worthy the perusal of persons who have any doubts on this subject. Such as bishop Watson's Apology for Christianity in answer to Gibbon; Watson's Apology for the Bible in anwer to Paine; the Age of Infidelity by Mr. Williams; Fuller's Gospel its own Witness; that incomparable work Gregory's Letters; and Bogue on the Divine Authenticity of the New Testament.

be right your's are *essentially* wrong; and pardon me, for I have no right to be your judge any more than you have to be mine, but my system necessarily leads to this conclusion—If you reject the remedy God has provided, remember there is no other, and you may be finally wrong and finally miserable. I have tried the pleasures of this world in search of happiness, and find them vanity and vexation of spirit, and I have tried the ways of religion which are scriptural, and find them to be ways of pleasantness and paths of peace. I have also seen these principles put to their test by persons in the last hours of life; when they have felt an effable serenity of mind, a cheerful devotion of spirit, and an unshaken confidence of a glorious immortality: be not surprised therefore, my dear captain, that I feel a sincere and friendly concern that you may believe unto eternal life, experience the happiness which I believe nothing beside can afford, and devote your life to glorify Him who has so wonderfully preserved and prospered you.

Captain Sims and his friends now entering the lawn, he said to captain

Wilson, "Has he convinced you, captain?" "I will not say much about that," replied Wilson, "but he has said some things I shall never forget." The subject now dropped, and the evening was spent in cheerful conversation, principally on religious subjects.

The next morning captain Wilson waited on his friend captain Sims, and informed him that he had not read the book written by major Burn, but requested the loan of it again, assuring him that he would give it a serious perusal. He immediately returned and read it with the avidity with which an hungry man receives food. Every page strengthened the convictions and deepened the impressions made the preceding evening. He ever after spoke of that book as a principal means in the hands of the Spirit of confirming his mind in the belief of the divine origin of christianity. As soon as he had finished reading "The Christian Officer's Panoply," which he did in a few hours, he began to read the scriptures, but this he did theoretically only, imagining that he might believe in christianity, and yet be a man

of pleasure, as he was acquainted with many who professed to believe in revelation, and yet were men of the world as much as he thought prudence would justify in himself.

The captain continued for some days reading the scriptures, and occasionally conversing with his niece and the captain of marines, but with frequent flights of levity, intended as a shield from the suspicions of his being a convert to christianity. Under the pretext of obliging Miss Wilson he proffered to drive her down to her place of worship on the sabbath, she having been previously united to a respectable Baptist church at Portsea, but with a secret resolution of hearing the young minister with whom he had passed the pleasant hours in conversation. The minister was then a probationer for the pastoral office over the congregation assembling in Orange Street chapel, and that the people might judge of his talents, of his sentiments on the doctrines of the gospel, and his views of christian experience, he had chosen to preach from the eighth chapter of the Romans every sabbath day morning till he

had explained the whole. The congregation was Calvinistic, and the minister thought it right to give a full exhibition of his sentiments that they might not proceed to the election unacquainted with his views on this difficult subject. On the day the captain first entered the place the text in course for the sermon that morning was "And whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." The foreknowledge of God had been the subject of a previous discourse, predestination therefore was the subject for that morning. The minister was in a high degree of perturbation when he saw the captain enter the place of worship, thinking it was unfortunate that such a doctrine should be the first he should hear, as he feared it might be misunderstood, and thus rivet his prejudices against the truth of christianity. He felt a wish if it had been any way possible to change the subject for some one (in his views) more likely to interest the captain's mind and impress his conscience; but this could not be done. He knew the people were come in expectation of this subject. Some

feared the young minister might darken counsel by words without knowledge; others feared the doctrine might be so represented as to make God the minister of sin, and to extenuate the guilt of human transgression; while others were concerned lest it should be explained away, and the Divine will be made to rest on the volition of fallen creatures constantly changing but always wrong; and instead of his purposes directing and controling all events, they should be represented as always floating upon human contingencies. Though the minister was agitated with fears during the singing of the hymns, his mind reflected on itself, Do you believe the doctrine you are about to explain and prove? Do you not believe that the Spirit of God knew the subject, and who were to hear it? If it be truth can he not make this truth as well as any other the means of that man's conversion to God? This reasoning calmed his apprehensions, and after some fervent ejaculations to the Spirit of truth he felt as though the voice of God addressed him, saying, "Arise, and preach the preaching that I bid thee."

The captain, as he often declared afterwards, was highly delighted with what he considered the simplicity of the worship, and the deep interest the congregation appeared to take in it.

The introduction to the sermon was formed with a design to produce seriousness of mind in the discussion of a subject which is of a serious and awful kind, and which it is confessed has difficulties in whatever view it is taken; in the second place, to excite candour towards those who could not see the subject in the same light in which it appeared to the preacher, (for the belief of the doctrine neither constitutes a real christian nor proves that he is one:) and also to call for candour from those who differ from the predestinarians; (for however luminous the evidence of its being a scripture truth may appear to them, and however important and useful they judge the belief of it to be, it is not considered by them in general as essential to salvation that persons should believe it in the sense they consider and represent it;) and lastly it was intended to excite prayer in the minds of the hearers,

that what was error might be perceived and rejected, and what was truth might be cordially received and humbly submitted to, whatever difficulties might attend it. The introduction disarmed the captain's prejudice and fixed his attention.

The divisions of the sermon shewed that it was the design of the minister, firstly, to make some observations explanatory of the doctrine of predestination—secondly, to advance some arguments to confirm it—thirdly, to shew the uses that should be made of it—and lastly, to guard both those that receive and those that reject the doctrine from abusing it.

The outlines and general principles of this sermon are stated here for the purpose of shewing in what light this doctrine was first presented to the captain, seeing it was often mentioned by him to his relatives, his christian friends, and to the missionaries, that it was the preaching of the doctrine of predestination that was the means of his conversion to God. As the doctrine had been useful in the hand of the Spirit to rouse his soul to a

sense of his danger, and to constrain him to seek in earnest for divine mercy and gracious influence, it was natural for him to think that occasionally and scripturally to preach it, is calculated to awaken others. He used to reason thus; if it be a truth it must have been revealed; if revealed it is fit men should believe it; if they must believe it the doctrine should be preached. Besides, certain minds require, he used to remark, strong and powerful sentiments to rouse their attention and awaken their conscience. If men are taught that they are in danger of being lost, but that the remedy is in themselves, the representation is awfully deceptive—for the first part of the sentence is much weaker than the scriptures represent the subject, and the other part is altogether untrue. The man who believes such a representation is in danger of procrastinating that to some future time, which should employ all the powers of his soul immediately. But if he believes—that he is *now lost*, for "Christ came to seek and to save that which *is* lost,"—that "he who has offended in one part is

guilty of all,"—that "he who believeth not is condemned *already*, the wrath of God abideth on him"—and that in consequence of man's moral depravity, "no man can come to Christ except the Father draw him;" or in other words, if the man believes that he is ruined, and that it depends solely on the grace and mercy of God whether he shall be saved, he is most likely to be alarmed and at once to fly to the refuge set before him in the gospel.

In the explanatory observations it was stated, 1. By predestination is intended, that wise, holy, good, and sovereign arragement which God purposed in himself, and in which he predetermined whatsoever should come to pass; but more especially it is the gracious determination of his will, to save those whom he foreknew or approved by delivering them from the condemnation of his law through the justifying righteousness of his Son; and by the influence of his grace subduing and finally eradicating sin, and restoring the lost image of God in their souls.

2. Predestination does not suppose a

number of abstract decrees, but a connected and harmonious arrangement of purposes. It does not decree effects without causes, ends without means, volitions without motives; so that no one would be justified in reasoning, as some thoughtless and ignorant persons say the doctrine would justify us in doing—"If God has predestinated us to be saved we shall be so, whatever we believe and however we act." Nothing can be more absurd or inconsistent with this doctrine than such reasoning, because the apostle declares, "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate *to be conformed to the image of his Son;*" none can be saved therefore, who is not conformed to the image of Christ, and he was "meek and lowly of heart, holy, harmless, and separate from sinners." He who has decreed the salvation of a soul, has predetermined that it shall believe, repent, be holy, and finally be made perfect in love; he has appointed the reading of the scriptures, the keeping the Sabbath, the hearing of his word, and prayer, as means by which these ends are to be effected, and he has

also promised the influence of his Spirit, as the great cause by which all is to be finally accomplished.

3. Predestination does not even interfere with, much less destroy, the free exercise of the human will. Men sin voluntarily, and all acceptable religious services must be the free exercise of the will. Though grace influences the will, it does not force but inclines it by the motives of the gospel, meeting and agreeing with the renewed dispositions of the heart, and hence the motives become operative on a pious or renewed soul, which have no influence on a wicked or unregenerated one.

It is said when Satan came to Christ he found nothing in him. The motives Satan had to present to him, met with nothing corresponding with them in his holy mind, and hence the motives produced no effect; so on the contrary, when motives to holiness and the service of God are presented to a bad man, they find nothing in his heart corresponding to them, and consequently they have no influence.

Though a man's conversion to God,

therefore, be the result of predestination, yet predestination has not effected the freedom of his will; for he as freely wills to be righteous and serve God now, as he before freely willed to be wicked and disobey him. Besides no one is influenced by the decrees of predestination as motives of his conduct, seeing no one can be acquainted with them as they are the secrets of the divine will.

4. Predestination affords no ground for presumption or for putting things out of that order which infinite wisdom has assigned. The revealed will of God is the rule of faith and conduct and not his secret will. The doctrine no more justifies a person in attempting to break the constituted order of things in moral and religious subjects than in natural ones. He who has rendered air essentially necessary to respiration, and food for human sustenance, and both essential to the maintenance of animal life, has rendered faith, repentance, and obedience, essential to salvation, not as conditions in the sense some present them, but as constituent parts of salvation, as the others are constituent parts of hu-

man life. It would be as much in vain to expect salvation without these constituent parts, as for men to expect the continuance of life without air and food.

5. Predestination properly understood presents no inducements to indolence on the one hand or despair on the other, but the contrary. Because I learn from the nature of things that it is pre-ordained that air should refresh me, I go into it; that water should quench my thirst, I drink it; and that fire should warm me, I approach it. Because God has pre-determined that faith should be connected with salvation I endeavour to believe, and because prayer is to be followed by answers we offer them. The doctrine can be no just cause even of discouragement much less of despair, because no one can understand what are the purposes of God till events have discovered them; and the promise is absolute that all who seek shall find, and all who ask shall receive; and the promise is as much a part of the scheme of predestination as the blessing promised, and surely the blessing of the promise being absolutely and immediately certain to them that be-

lieve can afford no cause of discouragement to faith. A man who knows the depravity of his own heart, and the mutability of his best resolutions, will feel encouraged from considering that his final salvation is dependant on God not on himself.

6. The doctrine of predestination accounts for many events which appear very unaccountable without it. Some persons appear to be singled out by Providence by a peculiar train of occurrences, and are preserved amidst a thousand deaths even while they are in rebellion against the divine Being, and at length they are truly converted to God. Others are brought to genuine repentance under the first sermon they hear, while others continue to hear the word for years with awful indifference, and to no saving benefit. The ways of Providence are inscrutable upon any scheme of doctrine, but they are more easily accounted for on that of predestination than upon any other. "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight," is a principle to which the reflecting mind must revert while contemplating the

divine gov ernment with reference to almost all events respecting itself or others. It is by banishing contingencies or chance from our system of faith, and tracing every thing up to the sovereign, infinitely wise, and all controling, but righteous will of God, that the mind is resigned to afflictive dispensations, and calm amidst terrific circumstances—" It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good."—Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do right?—" The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away," is language that shows our reason and will are prostrate before the throne of God, resolving all into the will of him who has a right to say " my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

Lastly. There is nothing in the doctrine of predestination, properly understood that is a reflection upon the justice or goodness of God—unless it could be proved that the events of providence are reflections upon *his justice and goodness;* for the occurrences of every day and of every province exhibit instances, which cannot be reduced to any standard that such objections would erect, of the justice

of God. It is as difficult to account for the facts of the sufferings of children in body, mind, and circumstances, on account of the conduct of their parents; of the sufferings of nations arising from the cruel conduct of a few individuals; or of the wretched slavery of one great part of mankind to the other; and of innumerable favours being conferred by Providence upon some parts of the world which are withheld from the other, as it is to account for the doctrine of predestination: this shows that men have incorrect ideas of the divine justice. To suppose that the divine Being is bound by any principle of justice to exercise mercy upon a race of rebels against his government is to suppose an absurdity; for this would resolve all his kindness to his creatures into acts of justice, which necessarily destroys the idea of mercy; and this involves another absurdity, that to exercise justice in any case would be an act of injustice. To suppose that because God is pleased to exercise mercy towards any of the rebels in his dominions, it would be injustice to the rest if he did not exercise mercy towards them, is not only

limiting the Almighty by denying to him the prerogative exercised by every supreme governor in the world, which is that of displaying his sovereignty in the discrimination of the objects and the ends of mercy, and of suffering justice to take its course as to others; but it is to suppose that the act of mercy towards the first individual that was pardoned, rendered it necessary, in order to preserve the honour of the divine character that all the rest should be pardoned; which converts what was an act of mercy in the first instance into an act of justice in every subsequent case; this also shows that some reasoners have very mistaken conceptions of the divine justice. The supposition that this doctrine is a reflection on the justice of God probably arises from two causes; first, from the want of a deep and proper sense of the evil and demerit of sin; and next from the unwillingness of the human heart to submit to the absolute and unlimited sovereignty of the divine Being; which is a principle so deep in human nature as not to be fully discovered, and so extensive in its operations as not only to arraign

the truths of revelation at its bar, but also the ways of Providence, and to "judge the justice of our God."

1. As an explanation of this subject was principally intended by introducing it here, it is unnecessary to say more by way of proof, than simply to state that the truth of the doctrine was argued from its being reasonable that the divine Being should propose to himself some ultimate end of all his works, that his glory should be that end, and that every thing and every event should be made conducive to it. An ultimate end to be accomplished supposes a design, a design supposes an arrangement of parts and operations, an arrangement supposes a determination, and the work is the result of the whole; this is what is intended by predestination. This argument is not only collected from the operations of the human mind in its progress to the accomplishment of some design, but is evident from the works of creation and providence.

2. It was argued from the admission of the divine prescience or foreknowledge. To deny his foreknowledge is to deny one of the perfections of his nature,

and what in the scriptures he claims as his distinguishing prerogative, but as it is observed by a great writer on this subject, "There can be no prescience of future contingencies, for it involves a contradiction to say things which are not certainly to be, should be certainly foreseen. If they are certainly foreseen they *must* certainly be, and can therefore be no longer contingent. An uncertain foresight is also an imperfect act as it may be a mistake, and is therefore inconsistent with divine perfection. On the other side the difficulty is easily explained: When God decrees that an event shall take place its existence becomes thenceforth certain, and as such is certainly foreseen. For it is an obvious absurdity to say that a thing happens freely, that is to say, that it may or may not be, and yet that it is certainly foreseen by God. He cannot foresee things but as he decrees them, and consequently gives them a certainty of future existence; and therefore any prescience antecedent to his decree must be rejected as impossible. Conditional decrees are farther absurd inasmuch as they subject the purposes of

God to the will and action of his creatures. Infinite perfection can wish nothing but what it can execute, and if it is fit to wish, it is fit to execute its wishes."

3. It was argued from the express language of the scriptures, and from its being evident that the apostle Paul intended to establish the doctrine, not only from the arguments he used, but from his anticipating and replying to the objections usually urged against it—the apostle's reasonings in the first of the Ephesians, and in the eighth, ninth, and eleventh chapters of the Romans, were cited in confirmation of the doctrine.

The use of the doctrine teaches those who believe it to admire the harmony, the irresistible energy, and the immutable stability of the divine government.—It affords encouragement for prayer by accounting for its efficacy, showing that the prayer, the promise, and the blessing, are inseparably connected in the purpose of God, and therefore constantly united in the divine conduct and in our experience. It lays a firm basis for faith, confidence, and hope, in whatever God has

promised, as it teaches us that his infinite wisdom, his all controling energies, and his immutable fidelity are all engaged to accomplish these promises. If some of the promises bear a conditional aspect, the condition of one promise is the blessing absolutely engaged by another.

The doctrine presents us with many powerful motives to employ every faculty we possess in working out our salvation; for it is God that worketh in us both to *will* and to *do* of his good pleasure, and we are persuaded that he who has begun the good work will perform it till the day of Jesus Christ "He is of one mind, and who can turn him, and what his soul desireth that he doth. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

The doctrine affords the strongest inducements to holiness of heart and conduct, for we are predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son—that we should be holy and without blame before him in love—that we should apprehend that for which we are apprehended of Christ Jesus—and that we should be to the praise of his glory. Now if the subordi-

nate ends are not accomplished or accomplishing we have no just cause to expect the ultimate end will be accomplished in us; hence the inducements to self-examination, to much and fervent prayer, and to an earnest striving to enter in at the straight gate.

Lastly, The doctrine affords various reasons for submission to afflictive dispensations and patience to wait the issue; for "the vision is for an appointed time, but though it tarry it shall speak and not lie."

The doctrine is indeed full of much holy and practical improvement, but it is acknowledged that it is abused by those who reject it, by making those who believe it answerable for consequences which they utterly disavow, and by their denial of the sovereignty of God, and making events contingent which the word of God assures us are certain. But the most fatal abuse to many is, that presuming on their own inherent ability, independent of the special grace of God, they rely upon the exertion of their ability at some future period, and thus from season to season they continue to pro-

crastinate the work; and in consequence of depending on their own strength they neglect earnestly to seek for that divine influence which is promised to those who ask for it till death closes the scene, and places the soul on that side the gulph, mentioned by our Lord, whence prayers are never answered.

Those who believe the doctrine were cautioned not to abuse it by viewing the subject in abstract parts, and separating effects from their cause—duties from privileges—the end from the means—sin from suffering—and holiness from happiness, for God having united them in his purposes, we must unite them in practice.

They were cautioned against attempting to pry into secret things, and of being wiser than what is written, for "secret things belong to God, and revealed things to us and our children." Could they read the book of purposes as clearly as the book of revelation, no one difficulty would be removed from the mind, but it must still submit to the divine sovereignty, and wait in faith for the accomplishment of his will; and lastly, those

who were under concern about eternal realties, and were desirous of salvation, were cautioned against drawing conclusions unfavourable to themselves; for whatever their doubtful minds might imagine respecting the secret purposes of God, there can be nothing contrary to the word of God, and its language is, "all that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh I will in no wise cast out." "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life."

This sermon was listened to by captain Wilson with a fixed attention, which excited the observation of those who sat near him, and especially of the minister in the pulpit. The sentiments produced a conflict of feelings in the breast of the captain, like what we may conceive to have been the conflict of the primary elements of nature when blended in chaos, each striving to obtain its situation and influence in the universe. His memory, reason, conscience, imagination, and passions, were all in agitation. His prejudices for and against the doctrine, his

hopes and fears, his love and hatred, his pleasures and disgusts, raised a storm in his soul resembling the concussion of the elements in a hurricane; for while his heart rose in hatred against the sovereignty of God, the events of his whole life appeared before him as incontrovertible evidences of its truth.

The impassioned strains in which the concluding part of the sermon was addressed to the auditory, representing the infinite compassion of the Saviour, his long suffering with sinners, the various and persevering methods he used to bring them to repentance, and his inexpressible readiness to receive and pardon all that applied to him for mercy, drew tears from those eyes which had never wept during the long and almost unparalleled sufferings he had endured under Hyder Ally. These silent tears, which he endeavoured to suppress, and which he was afraid to wipe off, lest he should excite observation, drew tears of benevolent joy from the eyes of his friend that sat opposite him, who heard the sermon more for the captain than himself, and spent a great part of the time in

turning its principles into earnest supplications for his spiritual welfare.

When the service was ended his friend asked him how he approved of the sermon; the captain gave him an evasive answer and left the place, manifesting an evident reluctance to enter into conversation. When alone, he reflected with himself; how could I have been such a fool as to suffer my feelings to be carried away as they have been this morning? No theatrical representation has ever produced such an effect as this sermon. To what can this be attributed; is it the spontaneous and earnest mode of address to which I have not been accustomed in hearing sermons? is it the coincidence of the principles of the sermon with the circumstances of my life? or is it the impression of the Deity upon my mind, of which the scriptures seem to speak? He was thus alternately agitated by speculation on the truths he had heard, and by the feelings they had excited. At one moment he considered them enthusiastic notions and impressions, and resolved to resist them; at another they returned upon him with increased vigour, and he

resolved to give himself up to their influence, feeling as though the tide was set in against him, and it were better to go with it than attempt to stem its current. The next reflection suggested, If I give myself to this current, where will it carry me? I shall be as great an object of ridicule as ever I have made others; if I begin I must go all lengths with these people and their notions, there will be no stopping or receding. Again, replied reason and conscience, if what you have heard bears the appearance of truth, ought you not patiently to investigate it? if it should be found to be truth, ought you not to submit and acknowledge it? May you not have been wrong in your sentiments and general temper of mind, and are not these sentiments and feelings the best preparative for death and a future state? A religion without feeling is a religion without interest, and if my passions are not to be employed in religious services, for what purpose was I made a being of passions as well as of intellect? In this state of conflict he spent the interval of worship with some painful remembrance of

former sins, and fearful apprehensions of futurity. When the time returned for the afternoon service he resolved to go to another place of worship, where he heard a sermon read on the prodigal son, not twenty minutes long, to which he listened with great attention, but when finished, he observed to himself, not a sentiment has been uttered this afternoon peculiar to revelation; any man, of whatever religious opinions, might have preached this sermon, for it is pure Deism. The sum of it was, that young people are prone to folly and extravagance, that every prodigal son should return to his father, and every father should receive a penitent son. Surely, thought the captain, it did not require the Son of God to come down from heaven to teach such common place principles as these, and though these are truths, I question whether the author of the parable had not some higher design in uttering it than this sermon imports. From this it may be seen that letting down the truths of revelation to a level with the principles of natural religion, by preaching mere

moral ethics, is not calculated to convince the Deists, or reconcile them to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

When returning home with Miss Wilson in the evening, the captain related the sermon he had heard in the morning, and the impressions it had made upon his mind. He appeared very serious and said, "If what I have heard today be true, I am a lost man." This language drew tears of joy from his affectionate niece, who immediately began to present the bright side of christianity to his mind, assuring him that he would soon find more pleasure from believing it than ever he had found from the world. He now became very pensive and thoughtful, the Bible and the writings of good men were his constant companions.

His friend, captain Sims, soon perceived that he was under very deep concern about the salvation of his soul, yet he said but little to him, for the captain wishing to know every thing at once, like youths who enter upon the study of a new science, asked such a variety of diversified and unconnected questions

that it was very difficult satisfactorily to answer them. The truth of revelation believed but partially, and with many painful suspicions, was now but a secondary object, his great concern being absorbed in the enquiry, How shall I be saved? Never did a labourer wish for the night of rest more than he longed for the return of the sabbath. The next Lord's day morning he was one of the first in the place of worship. The prayer astonished him; the adorations, confession, petitions, pleadings, and thanksgiving, every part appeared to be composed for him, and seemed to open the sluices of his soul that he might pour out his grief, fear, desire, and gratitude, into the bosom of the Father of spirits.

The next subject in course exhibited to his view a delineation of the image of the Son of God, the wisdom and holiness of God in predestinating that men should be conformed to him; the cause, progress, evidences, and advantages of that conformity, were explained and enforced. From this discourse he perceived that he was far from bearing a resemblance to Jesus Christ, that it is

the work of the Spirit of God to produce such a resemblance, that there can be no scriptural assurance that we shall be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, but by our bearing this resemblance, and that our happiness is only in proportion to the degree of our conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ. This sermon deepened former impressions. Sin appeared exceeding sinful. His judgment perceived the fitness, and his conscience felt the force of truth. The next sabbath morning, from the words "whom he did predestinate, them he also *called;*" the minister described the way in which a resemblance to Christ was begun, progressively effected, and finally perfected: and the sermon on justification opened to his mind the method of a sinner's acceptance with God. He perceived that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, that faith is the means by which a soul is interested in his justifying righteousness, and that the promise of the acceptance of a penitent sinner through Christ, is the ground or warrant of faith.

This discourse on justification was the

principal means of removing, in a good degree, the load of guilt which had for some weeks pressed on his spirits, and dispelled the gloomy apprehensions which tormented his mind about a future state. He now entered into the pleasures of religion. Before he was driven by fear, now he was drawn by love. The horrors of the night were turned into the joy of the morning. He now thought he understood what it was to be translated from darkness into *marvellous* light; from the power of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son, which is not in meats or drinks, in things external, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Old things were passed away, and all things became new.

His countenance which before had indicated the anxious thoughtfulness and desponding apprehensions of his grief-worn spirit, now brightened with cheerfulness, while a radiance of ardent love and gratitude seemed to sparkle in his eyes. His conversation was no longer forced, broken, and distressing. He spoke freely and in every company, for "out of the abundance of the heart the

mouth speaketh." He wondered that his friend, the captain, was not more exalted with confidence and elevated with joy, and began to reprove his former reprover for his lukewarmness. Indeed he was a considerable means of fanning the embers of his piety, which had lost too much of the fire of religious zeal and spirituality, by his living among the people, and in the maxims of the world, and at too great a distance from the social worship and the religious associations of serious persons. He had retired into the country, ten miles from the circle of his religious connexions, for the benefit of his health, but there is reason to fear that what he had gained for his body, he had lost in the life and power of vital religion in the soul.

Soon after captain Wilson's mind was relieved from distress by the knowledge and application of the gospel, he called upon his minister. This was the first interview they had with each other after the long conversation on the subject of Deism. He began by telling his friend that he had resolved for some weeks to

visit him, but at length the happy state of his mind constrained him to call. He then related the progress of his views from the time of the first conversation, and said, "I have no language to express the happiness I now feel; and the gratitude I owe to God, I hope, will be expressed in the life I have yet to live, by my zeal in the service of God, bearing some good proportion to that I have manifested in the service of Satan. But, my dear sir, I shall never reward you for the good I have received, were I to give you all I possess in the world, it would be but a poor compensation for the benefit I have derived from your conversation and ministry."

The pleasure felt by his friend was such as none but young ministers in similar circumstances are capable of understanding. It was a testimony to him and to the church of the presence of God being with their minister; and among other circumstances tended to produce unanimity and confidence in the church and congregation in their choice of him for their pastor.

The captain soon manifested to the

circle of his gay acquaintances the change of his principles by a change in his habits. He vainly imagined that he might keep their company with a view to their religious improvement, without going all the accustomed lengths of gaiety. He consulted his minister on the propriety of his design to maintain an intimacy with his worldly connexions, with a view to their benefit.—His minister perceiving it was not easy to reason him out of the belief of the probability of attaining his object, remarked, "I strongly suspect if you do not withdraw from their parties, they will withdraw from you." He soon experienced the truth of this observation. For a time, however, he accepted their invitations and received their visits, but endeavouring to carry his purpose into execution, he conversed with one on the truth of the Bible, and the necessity of constantly reading it; asking the individual some questions which tended to bring its truths home to his conscience: to another he spoke of the sin and folly of swearing and taking the Lord's name in vain; to a third, of the importance

of the sabbath, and the necessity of keeping it holy. To some of the loquacious ladies he manifested some doubts whether all the anecdotes they related of their neighbours were quite correct, and whether they might not bear a more favourable construction than they gave them. To others he even ventured occasionally to mention the subjects of death, judgment, and a future state, and to make allusions and applications, as though he thought it their duty to think on these subjects. For a few evenings he retired, hoping from their silence that he had made some useful impressions, and that his object would be obtained, but afterwards he found they had rallied their forces and combined their energies. One ridiculed his serious countenance as though he was surely very ill and was about to die; another on his being mealy-mouthed, and of using language only fit for the Methodist chapel; another took the Lord's name in vain and then apologized. The lady he had questioned as to the correctness of some of her whispers against those who were not of her party, had

no doubt but the captain would soon turn parson, and that she should see him with a white wig on a white horse; and a witty officer kept the company for an hour at a time in a roar of laughter, by relating a number of amusing anecdotes about the Puritans and Methodists, and church-going set. The captain found the flood of raillery, which he had often poured on others now returning on himself. He frequently tried to stem the torrent by argument, at other times he aimed to go with it by joining in the laugh till it had spent itself, but all to no effect. They were resolved either to rout him out of his strange notions, or to rout him from their society; but as they could not accomplish the former, their parties were at length formed unknown to the captain, but as he heard of them through the medium of his servants. He thus learnt that it was not possible to serve two masters—that there is no communion between light and darkness, and that a faithful and lively christian is constrained to come out from among the world and to be separate. They

have as great a dislike to his company as he has to their's. He now understood the meaning of that scripture, "Marvel not if the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you; if ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

The captain being a man of leisure and having no pleasure in the sports of the field, his time was principally occupied in reading. His minister was sometimes at his house for several days, pursuing his own studies on one part of the day, and directing those of his friend on the other. He read with avidity most of the principal works on the evidences of christianity, until he had obtained such a firm persuasion of the truth of revelation as to be able to say afterwards to his friend in a letter from Rio de Janeiro—"The Bible is no cunningly devised *fable;* though I may have my doubts at times of my personal interest in the glorious work of redemption, yet not all the men in the world,

nor Satan with all his principalities and powers, can, or ever will, I trust, persuade me that it is not the word of the Most High; neither could any thing so completely have weaned me from the things of the world as this precious volume has done, since I have been enabled to believe it to be the word of God."

The captain found that though one class of society shunned his acquaintance, another as eagerly sought it; for in nothing do real christians more resemble the spirits in heaven, than in the joy they feel when a sinner repents and testifies his love to the Redeemer. Many rejoiced to hear him tell what God had done for his soul, and cheerfully aided his mind in its searches after evangelical and experimental truth. But the captain, like most young christians who have had little previous acquaintance with the religious world, fixed his standard of the christian character higher than facts or the scriptures will justify. He had not then learnt the truth of that adage of our old divines, 'The best of men are but men at the best.' He ex-

pected to find in almost every one professing to be a christian, a degree of religious knowledge, of spiritual affections, amiableness of temper, disinterested benevolence, and glowing zeal for the honour of God, as much beyond what he experienced as their standing in the christian church exceeded his in duration. For a christian to be sleepy under a sermon, every sentence of which appeared to him almost like a new revelation from heaven, seemed totally unaccountable. That such persons should converse on any other subject than religion, except what was necessary to the economy of life, was to him a fearful indication that they were destitute of it; or that believers who agreed as to the spirit and constituent principles of christianity, should so differ about modes of worship, or their sectarian interests, as to produce an uncharitable or a bickering spirit and conversation, appeared to him a religious solecism. He often therefore returned from the company of some religious persons disappointed and grieved, scarcely able to exercise that charity which hopeth all things and

believeth all things, not properly considering that while he was waiting for their conversation, they, from what they had heard of him, and from diffidence in themselves, were waiting for his. Thus, while he improperly attributed their silence to want of zeal and spiritual-mindedness, they as improperly attributed his silence to Indian hauteur, which shews how cautious christians should be in putting unfavourable constructions on the conduct of each other.

For some months after the captain understood the knowledge of salvation through Christ, he believed what he read in the word of God without hesitation. Feeling that the gospel was just suited to his case, and not doubting but that God was sincere in his gracious invitations, and firmly believing his faithfulness to his promises, he cordially received the remedy that infinite love had provided, and resting his soul on the oath and promises of God, he enjoyed the comforts of the gospel in a high degree. He experimentally knew that the kingdom of God was in righteousness, peace, and joy. He was able to

call God his Father, and he walked all day in the light of his countenance. Old things were passed away, and all things were become new. Those who were most intimate with him, often found it a presage of heaven to be in his company. The "first love" of some was brought to their remembrance and re-kindled into a flame; others were deeply humbled and excited to close investigation of their own state, fearing by a comparison of themselves with him, that they had never felt the saving power of religion on their soul.

That believers of considerable standing in the church should question their interest in the blessings of the gospel, and be sometimes in darkness and despondency, were facts to him hardly credible and perfectly unaccountable. Time, however, the corrector of our early mistakes, taught him that he had known but little of the plague of his own heart, or of Satan's devices. Before two years had passed, former ideas recurred without their novelty, and consequently without the strength of first impressions, while on the other hand,

old ideas returned, and old propensities revived and struggled for ascendancy. The mind began to reflect on itself, and to trace its own operations in search of evidences of his being a partaker of the grace of God which bringeth salvation. —Now a variety of deficiencies were discovered, and the power of indwelling sin was grievously felt. He began to question whether his knowledge were not merely scientific, the effect of human, instead of divine teaching; whether his pleasures of religion were not the excitements of mere human passions, instead of the exercise of gracious affections; whether his confidence in the promises were not presumption, and his zeal for God the mere love of novelty and of self-applause. Not having yet learnt, while the eye of self-examination is investigating the state of the soul, to keep the eye of faith steadily directed to first principles—the infinite love of the Father, the efficacious atonement of the Saviour, and the promised agency of the Holy Ghost, his soul was involved in sore distress. While he was looking into the abyss of his own heart,

and into "the horrible pit" into which sin had plunged him, he forgot the rock on which he was standing. He now fell into the practice of most young christians, he reasoned on his feelings when he should have lived by faith; the one he might have done, but he should not have left the other undone. This, however, is a lesson not easily learnt, and when learnt, it is not easily practised.

His friend in the ministry had now to present another class of truths to his mind, and direct to another course of reading. The experimental writings of Dr. Owen were especially recommended, as giving a sound scriptural view of the work of God in the soul—such as his works on justification by faith—on spiritual mindedness, on communion with God—on the nature of the forgiveness of sin, and the case of a soul distressed with the guilt of sin, and relieved by a discovery of forgiveness with God, explained in his Exposition of the 130th Psalm—on indwelling sin—and on the nature, grounds, and evidences, of the faith of God's elect.

After a few months more, his mind was recovered from its perplexities; he had clearer views of the warrant of faith, and better understood the nature of christian experience. Though he perceived that the sanctification of the Spirit, forms the evidence of our meetness for heaven, and is as essentially necessary to salvation, as an interest in the justifying righteousness of Christ, he likewise saw that the atonement of the Redeemer and the promises of God, constitute the foundation of our hope of acceptance with him. On this basis he was enabled to build the superstructure of faith, hope, and practice, and when the evidences of grace became weak and indistinct, he had recourse to these first principles to revive and strengthen them.

Early in the year 1796, he was admitted a member of the church of Christ in Orange Street, Portsea, with great pleasure to the minister and to the people. His residence being ten miles from the place of worship, prevented his frequently associating with the pious, aged, and established members of the church. This was a considerable disadvantage to

him, for as "iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend." Habits of activity and benevolence are seldom formed from merely reading; they generally arise from example and association. It is much to be lamented that many christians have resided in country villages, surrounded with the poor and the ignorant, perishing for lack of knowledge, without using any means to instruct and save them, while those who live at a distance from such scenes, frequently converse on the most necessary and suitable objects of benevolence, and devise the means of sending the gospel into the unenlightened villages around them. The captain had not been sufficiently long in the church to have learnt the principles, and to form the habits of an active and extensive christian zeal. He had previous to his conversion, given proofs of considerable generosity to some of his relations, and which he increased after he had experienced the power of divine grace. But he had not been particularly excited to the exercise of liberality for the cause of God, till his

minister, preaching regularly on a sabbath morning through the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews, shewed that faith not only induces the negative parts of a christian's conduct in his abstaining from that which is *wrong*, but that it excites and impels to the active and benevolent virtues of the christian life.

This course of subjects excited in the captain's mind a considerable degree of painful anxiety, respecting his state as a christian. He now fully perceived that the design of God in imparting divine grace to the heart, was not only to save the individual, but to make him the means of saving others. "Ye are the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" began to revibrate in his conscience, as though spoken from heaven by the lips of his Saviour. He had reason to hope that his faith had done something for him, but it now became a solicitous enquiry, "what has my faith induced me to do for others?" To this train of reflections is to be attributed the reason for his offering himself to the Missionary Society, to convey their first missionaries to the islands of the Pacific Ocean.

PART III.

From the Captain's commencing the Missionary Voyage to the South Sea Islands till his return and settling in London.

Whether the islands in the South Seas were the most eligible situation in which to commence the efforts of the Missionary Society is now, after almost twenty years, a question of little importance to decide, as several other missions have since been established with various success, and time only can fully determine that point; yet it may be useful to observe that many advantages arose out of that mission. It was of great importance to the missionary cause that the Society should commence its operations by some mission that was most calculated to excite the attention of the religious world to this interesting subject, to diffuse the missonary spirit, and impart its impulsive energies to the christian churches abroad and at home, without exciting jealousies and opposition injurious to its progress.

Had the society been more slow and private in its operations at its first commencement, it is hardly probable that such a missionary flame would have been lighted up in the world as was seen to blaze in England, and to spread to many of the churches on the continents of Europe and America. Their plans gave publicity to the subject, and excited a lively interest in their design. It was a new event in the Protestant church for a ship to be wholly employed to convey missionaries to the most distant part of the globe. By this means the public attention and benevolence were excited in a good degree corresponding with the magnitude of their object. If it should be admitted that the sanguine expectation of many attributed more importance to the society's having a ship employed for the purpose than properly belonged to it, and that the description of the South Sea islands was too highly wrought, little short of the descriptions of the Elysian fields, or the primeval paradise; yet it must be admitted also that all this increased the popularity of the subject, and gave a glowing tinge to

the missionary hemisphere, which made it appear highly propitious to this glorious design.

It was also a station which could give no possible offence to our own, or to any other government, or national church upon earth. Perhaps there was no other place to which the attention and energetic operations of the Missionary Society could have been directed, at that perturbed period of the world, without exciting the jealous opposition of our own, or some other government. The South Sea and South African Missions gave time for the character of the Missionary Society to be established in the estimation of government, and showing by its sermons, public meetings, and conduct, that its objects were purely religious, to obtain its confidence, and even its patronage. Such has been the character of the society through the wisdom and prudence of its official conductors in London, that successive administrations have lent an attentive ear to their various representations, and have afforded them their protection and countenance. The influence of this society, in union with

other societies formed for the purpose of accomplishing the same benevolent object, has excited such a missionary spirit in the nation that parliament has been induced to open a more effectual door for the entrance of the gospel into Indostan, and to hold a shield of protection over the missionaries already there. The character of the first South Sea mission contributed in no small degree to produce this effect, and captain Wilson was no insignificant agent in the work. I would not put the influence of this event in comparison with the repute the society has since obtained by Mr. Morrison, one of its missionaries, being the first European who has translated, printed, and circulated, the whole of the New Testament in the Chinese language. Yet, at the commencement of the society, the benevolence of an independant gentleman in not only offering his services to the society without reward, but in spending more than five hundred pounds in the mission—his skill as a navigator—his prudence in presiding among the missionaries—and his success in the voyage, stamped a respectability

on the society which proved beneficial in its influence in many, both of the British and foreign churches.

Captain Wilson's friend, Dr. Haweis, shall here relate, with a few alterations, the manner in which he was led to engage in that noble and benevolent design.

"One day, after returning from Portsea, as the captain was walking in his garden, he meditated on the faith of Abraham in leaving his country and friends at the call of God not knowing whither he went. This was the subject of the sermon he had heard that day. On reviewing the circumstances of the patriarch he was much affected by the wonders wrought by faith, and admired the devotedness and self-denial of the worthies recorded in the eleventh chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews. While he mused on the nature and evidence of the faith there described, as the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, he began to question himself on the reality of his own, and felt a rising fear in his mind lest he should have deceived himself by placing doctrinal opi

nions in the stead of divine convictions of the truth. He asked himself, If called in Providence to suffer or to serve like these, whether he could as readily give up all for Christ, and go forth at the divine bidding?

"The impressions made by these reflections fixed deeply on his heart for several weeks, and his mind underwent many harassing fears and desponding feelings on this subject, till one day after receiving the Evangelical Magazine, the first subject which caught his eye and attention, was the account of a design to form a Missionary Society in London, and, if possible, to convey the gospel to the islands of the Pacific Ocean. The thought immediately forcibly struck his mind "If you are wanted to command the expedition have you faith to sacrifice all the comforts around you, and freely devoting yourself to the service, could you embark once more on the deep, not to increase your substance, but to seek the souls redeemed by the blood of the Lamb?" He felt that moment he could do it with pleasure; he perceived his faith was equal to the sacrifice, he read

the chapter over with delight, and was sure he could, if called, give himself up to God.

"He had enjoyed some happy hours in these meditations. They were the frequent subjects of his thoughts, when one day a series of new ideas rose up in his mind to which he had been hitherto a stranger. He had hardly, during all the years of service on the sea, ever known what fear was: he had been unaffected by the storms which he had encountered, and never thought of the perils of the deep; but now the dangers and difficulties to which such an enterprise must expose him rose up tremendous to his view, and he began to reason on the folly of quitting his present comfortable abode for a life so very different; and determined to try to banish the idea from his mind. It followed him, however, in spite of all his efforts. Fearing to trust his own judgment, he resolved to communicate his thoughts to some of his serious and most judicious friends, state to them the feelings of his mind, and have their advice on the subject.

"The general voice on the view of his

circumstances rather discouraged his entertaining any further thoughts of the matter. Though they highly approved of the mission, and honoured his zeal in desiring to promote so glorious a cause; some of them did not see his call clear to quit his present station, and persuaded him to weigh the subject well in his own mind before he determined. His mind, however rested not at ease. He was conscious he ought not to move but on some evident call of necessity—that he must see the path of duty clear before he quitted the comfortable settlement he enjoyed, and though his heart was greatly drawn out in prayer for the glorious object of the mission, he resolved to wait awhile the leadings of Providence, without entirely renouncing his purposes of service, if required.

" A general meeting of the Hampshire Association of Ministers being held at Salisbury, among other objects to consider, the subject of forming a Missionary Society, to decide on the intended mission, and to promote its accomplishment, he determined to accompany his minister thither, and hear what should be advanced

on the occasion. There also he mentioned to some of the brethren the impression which rested on his mind; but they rather in general damped than encouraged his sensations on the subject; and though they zealously favoured the missionary attempt, they hardly thought his services would be necessary, as it was to them improbable that a ship would be employed solely for that purpose.

"He had now probably dropped all further thoughts of the matter if the first General Missionary Meeting had not called up his pastor, with many others, to town, in order to consult what steps were proper to be pursued at the commencement of so great an undertaking. The captain resolved to be of the party, to see and hear for himself what was the object intended, and the means proposed for carrying the mission into effect.

"Previous to his going to London, feeling his mind in a painful state of perplexity and incapacity to decide what was right, he informed his minister that he had made up his mind to leave the case with him; he should have all the responsibility of his offering his service, or of

declining it. His friend was naturally unwilling easily to give up such a respectable and useful member of his church, and to sacrifice the pleasure of his society, yet felt sufficient zeal for the cause not improperly to influence his mind on such a subject. He however declined accepting such a responsibility, but declared himself willing to consult with him most conscientiously what was right, when the plan of the Society should be more fully developed.

"As the thing was evidently of the Lord, he came with a mind prepared for the work in the eternal counsels appointed him to fulfil. He listened with serious attention to the discourse delivered at the Castle and Falcon to the body of the society, "Wherein I," says Dr. Haweis, "expressed my confidence that however difficult the work might appear, God would provide instruments for the execution of his own purposes; that the means would never be wanting if we zealously set our shoulders to the yoke, and considered the glory of the object, and the urgency of the call." He attended next day at Spa Fields chapel, and heard the

first discourse, (since published,) enforcing our duty, describing the objects, and suggesting the steps necessary for the execution. These met his full approbation, and contributed to decide his mind on the subject. He desired his friend to call upon me and appoint an interview. His minister described the man and his conversation, situation, circumstances in life, his ability and zeal. "My very heart," says this venerable minister, "leaped with joy at the proposal, and I was filled with hope that God, in different places, was raising up men unknown to each other for the accomplishment of his own purposes towards the heathen. I begged to see him without delay, and we met next morning, when, after some conference concerning the mission, with great modesty and diffidence, but with a decided purpose, he intimated that if the society could not find a better conductor, which he wished and hoped they might, the service should not be impeded for lack of nautical skill, and that he was ready, without other reward than the satisfaction resulting from the service, to devote himself to the work with whatever

inconvenience to himself it might be attended. He gave me an account of the dealings of God with him, and expressed a sense of the obligation he was under to our Lord to dedicate himself to this service, as he said he should never forgive himself if he held back when his help was wanted. It was now agreed between him and his minister, that he should write a letter, addressed to the chairman of the next meeting, in the name of the captain, offering his services to the society, should they be needed, to carry its designs into effect. The letter was accordingly written, and two of the directors were appointed as a committee to converse with captain Wilson on the subject. They were equally charmed with his modesty, ability, zeal, and devotedness of heart to the work, and concurred in opinion that nothing could tend more powerfully to the accomplishment of our designs than having such a man to command the vessel that should convey the missionaries to the place of their destination. The offer was therefore embraced by the directors with delight, and contributed in a very special manner

to animate our confidence, that God would provide all other necessary means, and quicken us to execute the work without delay."

"I may speak with confidence," says the doctor, in his Memoir presented to the society at its last meeting, "where my brethren are all so unanimous in opinion, that a man more highly qualified for this work could not be hoped for if we had the choice of the whole land. In all his manners a gentleman—a mien that is commanding—an age yet in the prime of vigour with the maturity of experience—and with all, an amiability of diffidence of offering himself, that seemed only conquerable by the calls of the mission, and the deep impressions resting on his own heart. I confess I have been so struck with the circumstance, and many other particulars I could mention, that I know not where to close.

"The captain being presented to the directors confirmed the report which had been made; and though he hoped we might yet find an abler commander, and in that case he might be excused, and his heart be at rest, yet he pledged him-

self, if we could not, to do his best for the mission; and that at whatever time he should be called into the service he would come up and prepare for the voyage. At the end of the week, when the society broke up, he returned to his house in the country, leaving the deepest impression upon every man who conversed with him, that never did a person appear more eminently qualified for the discharge of this service, than the man so providentially prepared for us.

"Some months elapsed in the preparatory steps in seeking out and examining missionaries, providing funds, and weighing the most proper means of carrying the proposed mission into effect. After long and ample discussion it was resolved that the attempt should be made in a ship belonging to the society, sufficient to carry thirty missionaries, and that captain James Wilson be requested to undertake the command. This resolution was accordingly communicated to him, and though he had met with many causes to damp his zeal and deter him from the service, he continued fixed in his purpose, and his correspondence

breathed a spirit so truly noble that it was impossible not to congratulate each other on such an acquisition.

"The mission being now in great forwardness, and a second general meeting in May, 1796, having confirmed all our former resolutions, the captain was desired to come up, which he did, and took an active part in the preparations. Not less than seven or eight times did he go up and down, though more than sixty miles from town, at his own expense; sought out and purchased a proper vessel, forwarded every thing in his department; engaged the mariners, and settled all his own affairs for so long an absence. He sold his house at Horndean, fixed his niece in London, and prepared to embark with the missionaries in a long and perilous navigation.

"Through the whole of his eventful story we discover a beautiful and admirable developement of the leadings of divine Providence. Who would have looked for a commander of a christian mission in an impious and infidel sailor chained in a prison at Seringapatam? Who would have expected to have found

the man who returned from India contradicting and blaspheming the faithful leader in the missionary cause, within five years afterwards on the quarter-deck, in the midst of prayer and praise, carrying the everlasting gospel to the isles of the Pacific Ocean? Who that reads the history of his eventful life can hesitate to confirm the exclamation of the Moorman, 'This is God's man?'"

About this time he wrote to his friend at Portsea describing the state of his mind—

"London, June 28, 1796.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"According to my promise I write to inform you of a ship having been purchased yesterday afternoon. I this morning took possession. She is the first-rate vessel of her burden in the river, but when I tell you she cost five thousand pounds you will think she ought to be a good one. Such is the high value of ships at present that I think she is worth what we gave for her. She is river built, two years old, copper-bottomed and fastened, and a complete vessel for our purpose. I cannot help observing

that it will require all the well-wishers of the cause to exert themselves to the utmost—but why should I talk thus? Has He not power to command the gold that commanded such a rebellious wretch as I was, to be willing in the day of his power!

"Praise be to God for all his mercies. Were it not for the many precious promises, I know not what I should do, for it is really hard parting from all those we fondly love, and entering into a sea of trouble and perplexity. I look back on my past life with pain, to my future pilgrimage I look with fear and trembling, but to that state where we shall all meet and every tear be wiped from our eyes, I look with a pleasing hope, that I shall be one of that happy number, that God in his great mercy has chosen. This cheers my drooping spirits and causes me to press onward for the prize, forgetting the past and the present, and looking only to the future for real happiness.

"Had I thought I should have been held up to public view, as I have been by some of my friends, I should most

certainly never have offered myself, but now there is no retreating.

"I therefore trust that the Lord will strengthen me for the work, and enable me to accomplish it to his praise and glory. Ah! my worthy and dear friend, you say what I now experience. "New engagements and new circumstances will cause new trials." I am persuaded that even at this early stage of the business, I have seen more of the human heart, than I should have known for years in the calm retreat of a country life, but knowledge is of little use if it does not influence the heart. If I do not deceive myself, I think I feel more humble, and Jesus more precious than ever, and a throne of grace the greatest consolation I can enjoy.

"I am,
"Your affectionate brother in Christ,
"J. WILSON."

London, July 27, 1796.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

"I HAVE just time to tell you, I received your kind and affectionate letter, it came at a very suitable time. I had just returned from the India House,

where I met with the severest ridicule; but blessed be God, I bore it with patience, and I trust this is some proof, that he will bear me up through every trial and difficulty.

"I find my mind, though severely pained, yet quite resigned to the will of my gracious God and Father, and can look up to him for a supply of grace and strength in the trying hour of parting. You are mistaken, my dear friend, respecting my inward conflicts; I have never been more assaulted by the great adversary, since I professed to believe the truth as it is in Jesus, than I have recently; but blessed be his name, he has kept me, though I have been constrained to cry out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death." My inward and outward trials keep me very low, but I trust the Lord will enable me to carry his people to the furthermost parts of the globe. Should he bless me thus far, I trust I shall then be able to resign my all into his hands; for the only thing I wish now to live for, is to promote his glory.—Your affectionate letter I shall

peruse when I am many leagues from you, and will follow your kind advice.

"I hope the Lord will be with you of a truth. I shall be on my knees at half-past six on the morning you allude to, for the purpose of praying for you and my church, through whose instrumentality I have received such unspeakable blessings.

"I am,

"Ever, ever, your affectionate friend,

"J. WILSON."

The ship purchased for the voyage, was called the Duff. In her were embarked four ordained ministers, a surgeon, and twenty-five other missionaries or settlers, being pious persons, having for the most part been engaged in business or mercantile employments, highly necessary to impart the principles and habits of civilization to the South Sea islanders, together with six women, wives of some of the Missionaries, and three children.

The ship was manned by three principal officers, besides a gunner, carpenter, steward, and sail-maker, fifteen other sailors, and the captain, most of whom

made a profession of being under the influence of christian principles. They sailed from the river Thames, August 10, 1796, having for their flag hoisted at the mizen-top-gallant-mast-head, three doves argent on a purple field, bearing olive branches in their bills. The ship was navigated to Spithead, by Mr. William Wilson, the chief mate, where the captain joined her and took the command. Here they were detained, waiting for wind or convoy for some weeks. Several of the directors from London, visited the ship, and crowds of pious people from the neighbouring towns, who left a variety of presents either for the missionaries or for the natives. Such was the fervour of the captain's religious zeal, like most persons under first impressions and in new religious engagements, that he declared himself astonished after what he had heard in London, that none of the prominent ministers should offer to go as missionaries. He was equally surprised that any, who were not absolutely bound by circumstances, and had felt the power of truth, and knew the state of the

heathen world, could quietly remain in England, while millions abroad were perishing for lack of knowledge. His minister did not wish to damp his zeal, but urged a variety of considerations to regulate it. At the request of the captain, he wrote in a book various cautions, counsels, and admonitions, under different heads. These he often read, and as he afterwards expressed, found them of unspeakable advantage to him. His friend was aware, that though he had been extensively acquainted with the world in general, he had known but little, comparatively, of the religious world. Perceiving that his standard of the christian character was fixed very high, and his hopes corresponded with it, he endeavoured to moderate his expectations and prepare him for disappointment.

He pointed out to him, that among such a number there would necessarily be a great diversity of tempers, prejudices, and degrees of education, christian knowledge, and gracious dispositions, which, when circumstances put them to the trial, and their interests and

passions were affected, would without materially affecting their moral or christian character, create differences of opinion, and excite considerable tenacity of feeling and conduct. The probable failures of christians were drawn rather in dark shades, that his sanguine expectation, in case of some disappointments, might not overwhelm him with discouragement. Without intending any reflection either upon him or others, it may be observed, that he soon found these cautions highly necessary. It is easy to delineate what a christian should be, but in our intercourse with the christian world, we ought to expect no more from others, than we are willing they should expect from us. Undue expectation of excellencies in others, may lead to undue severities towards those whose foibles disappoint us, and thus hurry us into opposite extremes. The captain was a young christian, most of the missionaries were so, and such were most of those who professed to be religious among the sailors; no wonder, therefore, if some aged and experienced persons trembled for the ark of God,

and that the fears of the captain's friend should have been awakened by his own reflections, as well as by the apprehensions of others. However, there is no one deeply acquainted with the human heart, and who has had an extensive knowledge of christian society, when he considers how rapidly the mission was formed, and the persons who composed or conducted it were brought together, and who has had an opportunity of knowing all that passed during that voyage, as the author has had, but will be astonished that its progress and termination displayed so many excellencies, and so few real faults, either in the captain or the persons connected with the mission or the voyage.

The captain had an arduous task to perform. He had duties to discharge, which required great diversity of talent, and even opposite qualifications. Among the sailors, he had to maintain authority and command, and yet conduct himself towards them as a brother in Christ. Among the missionaries, he had to preside in their meetings of debates and arrangements, and at once to step from

the command on the quarter-deck into the missionary cabin, and there, forgetting that he was captain, to preside as a brother. Such a situation required great firmness and decision of character, and yet much real kindness and pliability of temper. These observations will be fully confirmed by a perusal of the following well-written, but diversified and important instructions, given to the captain by the directors. These placed him under great responsibility, not as it regarded the navigation of the ship only, but in conducting the different missions, and that too through the medium of the votes of the missionaries.

Letter of Instruction to Captain James Wilson from the Directors.

August 5, 1796.

"THE constant protection with which it has pleased the Divine Being to favour the concerns of the Missionary Society, renders it incumbent on us, before we enter on the immediate subject of our address to you, to make an humble and undissembled acknowledgment of

the gratitude which is due to Him, and to recognize with thankfulness the frequent and manifest interpositions of his hand in favour of this institution.

" Among many other occurrences which have appeared to us of a nature peculiarly providential, and which we have considered as the proofs of the condescending care with which it has pleased the great Head of the church to regard this undertaking, there has been none that excited more gratitude to his name, or occasioned more universal satisfaction among ourselves, than the circumstance of your having been inclined to consecrate yourself to the service of God on this interesting occasion. We trust that the same Being, from whom the disposition has proceeded, will impart the grace which is requisite to accomplish the arduous service, and inspire the wisdom which is needful for the execution of its important duties.

" Connected with us in the direction of the affairs of the Society, you are fully apprised of the nature and design of the expedition you have undertaken to

conduct. You are aware that it is not only in its nature singular, and almost without a precedent, but that it is also one of the most honourable and most important services which can be confided to a human being.

"The attention of the christian world is very generally excited to the object, and devout intercessions are continually ascending like incense to heaven for its success. Should it be favoured with the blessing of God, it may be the direct means of imparting divine light and eternal life to great multitudes of immortal beings, and may form an æra of distinguished importance in the history of human redemption. In this view of the interesting nature of the business we are engaged in, it is with sincere affection and peculiar satisfaction, that we, the Directors of the Institution, not only invest you with the command of the ship, and with full and complete authority for the management of its concerns in relation to the voyage, but also commit to your care and superintendance during the same period, the more important charge of the mission

itself, and especially of those faithful brethren who accompany you therein. Dear to our Saviour, in whose name they go forth, these apostolic men will have a strong interest in your affections also. Having forsaken their friends and their country for the love of Christ, and with the desire of spreading the honours of his name among the heathen, they will seek in your kind attention an equivalent for the endearing connexions they have relinquished, and you will be desirous of extending toward them the wise superintendance of a parent, and the affectionate sympathy of a brother. You will cheer the spirit that is liable to droop under the pressure of its anxieties, or administer the word of admonition to the disciple that is in danger of erring. You will be among them the centre of union, to reconcile their divisions, and confirm their love—the universal friend, in whose bosom they will deposit their diversified cares.

"As it is needful you should be furnished with instructions, both with respect to the voyage itself, and also with relation to the establishment of the mis-

sion, it is our duty to desire that after having received your cargo on board, an invoice whereof you will be furnished with, and also the missionaries who are to accompany you, whose names and occupations you will have an account of, you will please to proceed with all possible dispatch to Portsmouth, in order to join the East India convoy now lying there, to which you are to attach yourself, and to use every exertion in your power to keep company with it, as far as its course and yours are designed to coincide.

" In case the convoy should stop at Teneriffe, you will procure four pipes of the best wine, in hogsheads, for which you will apply to the house of Messrs. Paisley and Little, and reimburse them for the amount by your draft on the Treasurer to the Institution. You will endeavour to procure from thence two or three bunches of dried grapes of the best kind, and the seeds of such tropical fruits as you may think it would be advantageous to take with you. You will also endeavour to procure one ram sheep and two ewes, to be preserved

for the purpose of breeding, and also a male and female ass for the same purpose. You will also at this place probably have an opportunity of giving your ship's company and the passengers several meals of fresh meat and vegetables; which, as it will promote their health and comfort, we are well persuaded will not escape your attention. On taking your departure from Teneriffe, we wish you to consider the Port of Rio de Janeiro, on the coast of Brazil, as your next object. At that place you will be able to lay in a stock of sugar, very cheap, for the use of the ship's company and missionaries on the voyage, as well as for the latter after they are put on shore; as also tobacco, chocolate, cochineal-plant, and many other vegetable productions useful for consumption and cultivation at the settlement. Here you will also embrace the opportunity to procure a supply of fresh meat and other desirable articles for the refreshment of the ship's company, at a reasonable rate.

"From this port, we wish you to proceed by way of Cape Horn to the

Island of Otaheite, there to put in execution the directions which will be hereafter suggested, so far as they may appear to you eligible on your arrival. In the mean time, we think it material to provide against the probability of your meeting with a foul wind in your attempt to double Cape Horn, in which case, after having made the first attempt as close in with the land as you think consistent with the safety of the ship, we recommend you to stand to the southward, to the distance of, at least, four or five degrees; when, if you still find the wind blowing steadily against you, rather than lose much time in attempting to beat against it, we advise you to bear up and run for the Cape of Good Hope, where you will find those refreshments which, by that time, you will stand in need of.

"On your arrival in the South Seas, the destined scene of your benevolent exertions, the immediate prospect of the important service before you will impress your mind with peculiar weight, and you will be anxious to fulfil to the utmost of your power the engagement

you have undertaken. You will then recollect that the sphere of your activity is widely extended, and includes a considerable number of different islands remotely situated from each other; you will be reminded of the resolution of the General Meeting, which was thus expressed:

'That a mission be undertaken to Otaheite, the Friendly Islands, the Marquesas, the Sandwich, and the Pelew Islands, in a ship belonging to the Society, to be commanded by captain Wilson, as far as may be practicable and expedient.'

"This resolution embraces a plan of great extent and importance, and proceeds from the laudable and benevolent desire of introducing the knowledge of Christ into as many different islands as possible; you will therefore consider this resolution as the rule of your conduct, and keep it in your remembrance in all your proceedings. It is not to be departed from without solid and important reasons; for, as the gospel of Christ is a blessing beyond the power of calculation to estimate, the desirable-

ness of sending it to as many islands as possible, is in proportion to its inestimable value. We do not mean, however, to encourage you to adopt a system of missionary enterprize beyond the boundaries of discretion; we do not urge you to depart from the principles of prudence and caution which so important an occasion requires; nor by attempting to introduce the advantages of christianity in many places, so to divide your numbers, as to weaken your efforts too much in each, and endanger your success in all. The resolution is not intended to prevent a wise and discreet circumspection. It is indeed desirable to introduce the gospel into several islands, but it is necessary, if possible, to establish it in one; for, if you concentrate your exertions, and gain a solid establishment in one place, it may become the germ of their missionary efforts, and be a sacred leaven which may gradually spread its beneficial influence through numerous and distant islands of the South Seas. Thus you will perceive, that although the resolution by which you are to endeavour to

regulate your operations is of great extent, and highly desirable to be accomplished, yet that it is limited by the considerations of practicability and expedience; and of these you will of necessity be the best qualified to judge.

"The question respecting the practicability of visiting so many distant islands must be decided by circumstances which it is impossible for us to anticipate; and even to you, when in the South Seas, a mission may appear to be practicable, which you, nevertheless, may not think it expedient to attempt. For instance, the Pelew Islands are the last which in the order of your voyage you will have occasion to visit. The character of the natives furnishes a strong inducement to establish a mission among them, and the attempt may also appear to be practicable; but would you think it expedient to take a few missionaries from the islands at a great distance to windward, at an uncertainty of the reception which a missionary plan might meet with in the former? Suppose that by a new chief having arisen with less favourable dispositions

than the father of Le Boo, or through any other cause, you should be prevented from leaving our brethren there, with perfect satisfaction to yourself and them, what would be the effect? You could not admit of the waste of time, and the expenditure of money which it would require to convey them to the islands where your other missionaries may have been established, even if your return thither against the trade wind was practicable: and you would probably have no alternative but that of bringing them with you to their native land. The same reasoning may apply with respect to the Sandwich Islands. It is extremely desirable that the blessings of the christian religion should be extended to those populous regions; but the indubitable accounts which we have lately received of the actual state of those islands, do not permit us to recommend the establishment of a mission among them at present. A variety of considerations will occur to your mind, when you are to decide on what is practicable and expedient. If you look over the inventory of the different

articles which make up your cargo, supplied by the liberality of our friends, or furnished from the funds of the Institution, you will probably conclude that they are much more adapted for the co-operation of a number of individuals in one or two Societies, than for distribution among more. When you consider the qualifications of the missionaries you will perhaps be inclined to think that remaining in one or two bodies they may form models of civilized society, small indeed, but tolerably complete. There are some among them who are adapted to be useful by the improved state of their minds, and their fitness for taking the lead in religious services; there are others who are necessary on account of the skilfulness of their hands, and their knowledge of the useful arts; thus there would be among them that mutual dependance and usefulness which is the cement of the social order.

"If you should separate them into several parties for various missions, it would occur to you that this order and connexion would be very much broken; and as every mission should contain

within itself a competent fund both of divine and human knowledge, you might perhaps find it impracticable to arrange our missionaries into several parties, and yet preserve among them these indispensable requisites. Among our brethren who accompany you we trust you will find some who possess a considerable acquaintance with the doctrines of christianity, in their foundation and mutual dependance, and are qualified for the defence and confirmation of the gospel; but others of them have not perhaps a view of the subject sufficiently accurate and enlarged to fit them for the office of teachers. They understand indeed the doctrines of grace in the most precious sense by experimental conviction; and having a general idea of them may be very useful to the heathen by means of their conversation, as well as their exemplary lives. But in every mission, however small, it is essential that there should be some whose minds have acquired a maturity in divine things, and who are scribes well instructed in the kingdom of heaven. This it might be difficult for you to accomplish on the

plan of establishing a number of different settlements.

"If, from these reasons, or others which may arise in your mind when you are amidst the scene of action, you judge that the cause of Christ among the heathen will be best promoted by the establishment of fewer missions, we shall receive great satisfaction in finding that you are able to visit more islands, with a view to the introduction of the gospel among them at a future period. By means of some of the Europeans now probably residing at Otaheite, who may be disposed to accompany you, your access to the understandings of the islanders will be facilitated: you will easily communicate to them the beneficial plan you are projecting in their favour, and you may ascertain how far a mission to any of them may be advisable. This mode of procedure is highly desirable, as it may throw a considerable light upon our future path, and assist our judgment respecting the designs of Providence toward these islands. It is the more to be recommended on account of the great degree of probability there is of our

revisiting them soon after the safe return of our vessel from her present expedition; as it is evident, with the assistance of a freight homeward, the navigation to those seas may be hereafter undertaken at a little comparative expense, and thus opportunities be afforded of frequent intercourse with them. Submitting these considerations to your attention, we now think it necessary to offer you a few more observations derived from the best information we can obtain, and the best judgment we can at present form on the subject: you will adhere to them or not, as you may find it expedient when you arrive.

"It is well known that Otaheite is the island on which the general expectation has been fixed as the place where our first mission is to be attempted; and we have no reason to alter the opinion we at first entertained of the eligibility of the spot; but as our object is to introduce the gospel of Christ among the heathen, all partialities or predilections to particular places must be made subservient to that end. We conceive you will visit that island before any other, and

you will doubtless have an early interview with the chiefs. It must be left to your own discretion how far you will unfold unto them the occasion of your voyage. You will also probably soon be visited by some Europeans, and will, most likely, find means to conciliate their esteem and confidence without committing yourself to them any further than you may think prudent. All your discrimination may be requisite to fix on those among them who are best suited to become your instruments; from them you will learn the present state of this island, and perhaps of those adjacent, as to produce, population, disposition of the nations, and political relations. You will be on your guard against misrepresentation, and by comparing different reports find out the truth. You will also guard against treachery and surprise. You will be cautious whom you admit on board; especially you will not allow the females, except the wives of the chiefs, and only a few at a time. Neither would it be prudent to permit too many of the English, if remaining at Otaheite, to be on board at once. You will take an early

opportunity of visiting the smaller peninsula, as it has been represented by some voyagers to be the most fertile, well cultivated, and abounding with cotton and sugar cane. Let the ship run down to the adjacent islands of Eimeo, examine the harbours of Taloo and Avoitai, converse with the chiefs, learn the present state of that island, and the dispositions of the inhabitants toward a settlement of some of our brethren among them. After you have ascertained to your satisfaction the kind of treatment which the missionaries are likely to experience at Otaheite, you will be more capable of judging how to improve the remainder of your voyage than we are at present. To assist you in the direction of your farther attempts, we recommend to your attentive perusal the papers which have been committed to you containing a description and historical account of the islands that are connected with Otaheite, or inclosed in the groups, called the Friendly Islands, and the Marquesas. You will compare them on the grounds of immediate advantage, and future prospects. To this subject belongs the con

sideration of the safety of our women, probability of introducing our improvements, supply of provisions, the products of the islands, in sugar, cotton, sandal-wood, &c. We are thus particular in suggesting these observations to you because you are much better qualified than we can expect any of the missionaries to be, to decide on the most eligible spots for our settlement, and it is a circumstance of so much importance as to claim your utmost attention. You will, doubtless, on this subject hold very frequent communications with the missionaries, and especially with the committee, stating to them the grounds on which you may prefer one spot to another, as it would be peculiarly desirable to obtain, if possible, a perfect unanimity of the whole body as to the place of settlement; and the objections of those who may happen to think differently from yourself, or from the majority of their brethren, should be attentively heard, and maturely considered. It is however very difficult for so many persons to coincide on any subject; and we therefore place the power of decision in a majority. As we con-

clude that you possess a superior judgment on this subject to any of them, it appears to us to be a regulation highly conducive to their good that no settlement should be made without your approbation. For the sake of relieving you from some part of the responsibility, we lodge in the same committee, and subject to the same rule, the power of deciding whether there shall be more missions than one established, and where the subsequent ones shall be attempted.

"To this committee belongs also, under the same restriction, the controul over the articles, implements, and utensils, which make up the cargo of the ship, and they, with your concurrence, are to decide when, where, and in what proportions those articles are to be landed. In case however of several missions being attempted, (for the sake of strict and impartial justice,) we appoint that two of the committee shall be taken from those who remain at the first settlement, and two others from those who are intended to be detached to any other, yourself being the president, and perfectly disin-

terested, will have the power of administering justice towards both. It is, however, intended that a quantity of articles suitable for presents to the chiefs of islands which you may visit in your way to Canton should remain on board, and you must have the power of deciding what articles, and what quantity of each shall be reserved for that purpose.

"To a number of serious christians who are, on all occasions, seeking divine direction, it will no doubt occur that the determination of any question respecting attempts to extend the gospel is of such trandscendant importance, as to require the most solemn invocation of Him who heareth prayer, for the interposition of his wisdom to guide you in judgment. An unanimity, or nearly so, of the whole body, on questions so interesting, and which are to be decided after a solemn season of devotion appointed for that special occasion, would afford considerable satisfaction to our minds as a favourable intimation of the divine superintendance.

"In negociating with the chiefs you

will explain to them the advantages which will arise to them from our residence among them; that it may be the happy effect of their earnest desire, and not of our solicitation. As an inducement to us to prefer their island, they must give us a full title to the land we may have occasion for, guarantee to us the safety of our property from plunder, the enjoyment of our laws and customs, and the undisturbed exercise of our religion. Instead of exciting the jealousy of the chiefs by any importunity on our parts to continue with them, it would be more prudent to show a readiness to leave the island and fix upon some other; that it may be understood by them that our inducements to visit them have not been to receive advantages, but to confer them. On this principle, as well as for other reasons, we recommend that the land should not be purchased, but required as the condition of our remaining with them; and that the presents we make should not be considered as payments but as gratuities—the expressions and pledges of our good-will. If you should determine to make a settlement

at several islands, you and the committee will decide what number, and which individuals should reside at each. If this should be the occasion of disputes which you cannot amicably terminate, we recommend your appealing to the decision of divine Providence by a solemn and religious use of the ancient institution of drawing lots.

"We have now finished the instructions which appeared to us needful to communicate with respect to the mission. The changes which may have taken place in the state of the islands since the last accounts, may make it necessary for you to depart from the advice which we have now offered, and resort to expedients more congruous to the circumstances before you, and better fitted to secure the great object.

"On your arrival at Canton, you will address yourself to the Factory of the India Company, and in all respects conform to the conditions of the charter, a copy of which you will take with you. You will in particular observe the necessity of your being there by the month of December, or at latest in the month of

January, 1798, that you may receive your cargo on board, and sail for Europe in the early part of the spring. Thus we shall cherish the hope of your safe return soon after the succeeding midsummer. In the mean time you will doubtless embrace whatever opportunities occur of writing to us either from Rio de Janeiro, or by the first ship which sails from Canton, and let your dispatches be addressed to Mr. Joseph Hardcastle, of London.

"We have now only to commend you to the all-sufficient care and protection of 'Him who holds the winds in his fists, and the waters in the hollow of his hand.' The throne of mercy will be addressed with unceasing supplications in behalf of your safety, and the success of your embassy. You are accompanied by the affectionate esteem of the excellent of the earth; and ministering spirits we trust will receive the welcome charge to convey you in safety to the place of your destination. May they be glad spectators of the formation of a christian temple in those heathen lands, and thus be furnished with the subject of a new song

to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb!

"Signed by order of the Directors,
"JOHN LOVE, Secretary."

The convoy being at length ready, and the wind steadily fair, the ship, in company with more than fifty others, sailed from Portsmouth on the 23d of September, wafted by propitious winds, and under the auspices of the effectual fervent prayers of many thousands of British christians. The ship on her passage touched at St. Jago, and arrived on the 12th of November in the harbour of Rio de Janeiro, whence the captain addressed the following letter, giving an account of himself and the voyage, to his friend at Portsea.

"Rio de Janeiro, Nov. 15, 1796.

"MY DEAR AND REVEREND FRIEND,

"Were you near the directors I would refer you to their letter for information, but as that is not the case I will give you all I can. We sailed from you on Friday the 23d of September, and on the following sunday we lay to off Falmouth; and

on the 30th, a fresh wind springing up from the north-east, I thought it a favourable opportunity of parting with the convoy, by which we had been considerably detained. In six days afterwards we passed the island of Madeira, and on the 14th of October cast anchor in Porto-Praya bay, in the island of St. Jago. After getting our water-casks filled, and obtaining other refreshments, we sailed the next day, so that you will see there was no time lost. At this place, and the two following days, we experienced the hottest weather, and then the thermometer was only 77 degrees, and when immediately under the sun, which was in latitude 16° south, it was 72=30. Thus you see how exceedingly kind our God has been to us. From the time we sailed till our arrival here, the vessel has had little more motion than on the day you and our friends came on board in the sloop. On the 29th we crossed the equator in longitude 30° west. Hereabout we had a few squalls. These being what the missionaries were not accustomed to, the first alarmed them very much. They were at prayers below at

eight in the evening, when the vessel laying down, suddenly some fell to leeward; one in particular got up the forehatchway, but before he knew where he was he tumbled head-foremost down the main, without hurting himself. These things to old sailors cause a great deal of mirth, when attended with no injury.

"We arrived here on Saturday the 12th instant. After waiting on the governor I could not go on shore again, owing to the ceremony of visiting the ship, which was not over till late last night. A fleet bound to Lisbon being on the point of sailing, I thought it best to stay on board to write to you and the directors, lest I should lose this opportunity. I mean if possible to sail from this place by Saturday next, as I wish to get to the field of action. I trust the great Head of the church will conduct us safely through, and give me wisdom to conduct this interesting undertaking. We must be infidels indeed, after experiencing the past loving kindness of the Most High, not to trust him for the future.

"Myself, officers, missionaries, and ship's company, are all in perfect health,

blessed be his name, who said, 'When thou goest through the waters I will be with thee.' This promise, with many others, we have fully realized. I have had five of the missionaries at my table every day, besides giving all on board one, and sometimes two fresh meals a week, beside other refreshments suited to the climate. Some of the missionaries tell me they have not tasted salt meat yet. Their conduct has really been very pleasing. I have do doubt but the Lord will do good by them to the poor Indians. I am persuaded should one soul be called to the knowledge of the glorious gospel of our blessed God and Saviour, it will more than recompense me for all the dangers, watchings, anxieties, and various privations that I have had, or may have to endure, in this long voyage; I feel my mind prepared to act as circumstances offer; I am persuaded that God has called me to this work, and that he will carry me through it. I know, my dear friend, in my own strength I can do nothing right, but as the apostle says, 'I can do all things through Christ who strenghteneth me.'

"The Bible is no cunningly devised fable, though I may have my doubts at times of my personal interest in the glorious work of redemption, yet not all the men in the world, nor Satan with all his principalities and powers can, or ever will, I trust, be able to persuade me that it is not the word of the Most High. Nothing in this life could so completely have weaned me from the things and maxims of this world as this precious volume has done since I have been enabled to believe it to be the word of God. I have not had yet a single wish for any of my temporal blessings left behind, and the only fear I have had, has been, that the Lord would not prosper the work in my hands.

I have been often afraid lest I should not please the society; but now, though conscious of always offending, I can go and plead with my great Employer my own ignorance and insufficiency, and earnestly intreat for more wisdom and strength according to his promises. This, my dear friend, is part of my experience since I left you. I trust I have an interest in your prayers, and in

those of the church. Give my christian love and affectionate regards to them all. My continual prayer to God for them is, that they may live in brotherly love, and that they may stir up each other to act more and more like King's sons and daughters, and not to choke the good seed with over anxious cares for the things of this world. This will pain their consciences and fret their souls till they are as lean as Pharaoh's cattle. I trust, my dear friend, as the Lord has placed you over his vineyard you will be careful to destroy those injurious weeds. I know you cannot do this of yourself, but what you have to do, is to use the means, to cry aloud and spare not, and leave consequences with your Master.

"I would have written to my friend Mr. Eastman, but I think as I have written you every particular, and am very much engaged, he will excuse it: give my christian love to him and to all his family—let me hear from you at Canton in China. Give my love to all my christian friends in your neighbourhood. The Lord bless you, guide you, prosper and

preserve you, is the fervent and sincere prayer of

"Your affectionate brother in Christ,

"J. WILSON."

Nothing further was heard of the Duff till May the 11th, 1798. On Friday morning, the last day of the fourth general meeting of the society, when it was favoured with the use of the elegant and spacious church of Spitalfields; "In the time of service a note was sent to the church," say the directors in their report, "that the Duff was on the list received that instant at Lloyd's, of ships safely arrived at Canton in China before the end of December." This Dr. Haweis announced from the pulpit as soon as the prayers were ended, that the whole congregation might partake of the joy which began to be communicated from individual to individual, and that all might unite in praise to God on the occasion; the emotions excited by this pleasing and unexpected information can be more easily conceived than expressed. The next day the following letter was received from captain Wilson from

China, which is inserted because it gives an epitome of the voyage in the laconic and unvarnished language of the captain. This letter was circulated as speedily as possible among the members of the society in town and country.

To Joseph Hardcastle, Esq.

"Canton, Dec. 16, 1797.

"DEAR SIR,

"I wrote to you last from Rio Janeiro, dated the 15th of November, which I hope you received, informing the society how kind our heavenly Father had been in wafting us so far in perfect health and safety; we can now further say from experience that he has never left us from that time to this. At present I can only give you the outlines of our voyage, which, no doubt, you will be all glad to hear.

"After receiving a plentiful supply of every thing needful, which I was able to pay for, having cash of my own, we left that port on the 19th. From that time to the 3d of December nothing material happened, only the weather getting gradually colder. But the Lord showed us we were going the wrong way by send-

ing a severe gale from the south. We could now see that to beat round Cape Horn would be folly to attempt. After shipping several heavy seas, by which we lost some of our live stock, we bore up to go by the Cape of Good Hope. This was a great trial, being in latitude 30, and longitude 50 west, and having now a line to run of 262 degrees in longitude, beside latitude. However, we had soon reason to rejoice, for by the 24th of January, 1797, we were in longitude 133 east. Had we laid to another night ere we bore away we must have lost all our stock; instead of which the missionaries had fresh meat twice a week all the way, besides dining with me as before related; and though we had repeated gales we never had occasion to batten down our hatches once; add to this the inestimable blessing of the public ordinances of our God, and the missionaries every means of improvement. Thus were we carried along in a most pleasing manner. On the 30th of January we rounded New Zealand, and on the 4th of March made Otaheite; but from various winds we did not anchor in Matavia till the 6th, where

we were received in the most friendly manner.

"Here mark the dealings of Providence: a large house, which the natives had built for captain Bligh, was just finished; the whole island in perfect peace (Pomarre and his son Otoo being absolute sovereigns of this island, and of Eimeo,) thus our business was expedited; for, instead of many chiefs as we expected, we had only to make our errand known to Pomarre. This we were fully able to do, our God having kept two Europeans for the purpose, the other having gone to Europe; one of them whose name is Peter, had left the Dædalus, the other named Andrew, was cast away in the Matilda, and had been five years on the island: both could talk the language fluently. Our reasons for coming were no sooner made known to Pomarre, than he said we should not only have the house, which is a hundred feet by forty, but that all Matavia should be given to the English, which was accordingly done in the most formal manner.

"After having thus succeeded, far be-

yond our expectation, it is now necessary that I should acquaint you that some time before we made the land, the missionaries had divided in the following manner. Eighteen for Otaheite, besides women and children; ten for the Friendly Islands, and two for the Marquesas. This being the case, we had no time to spare. As soon, therefore, as I saw them in their commodious house, we sailed for Eimeo, with a view to get the ship ready, but more particularly to see how the natives would behave during the absence of the ship. After five days we returned—found them all well, the natives having treated them with the utmost kindness. Having no time to spare, we made all sail to the Friendly Islands. This was on the twenty-sixth of March. On the first of April we made Palmerston Islands, and on the ninth, Tongataboo. The next day we anchored about the place captain Cook lay, according to his bearings. The anchor was no sooner gone than the ship was surrounded with canoes. A number of chiefs came on board, who informed us that two Euro-

peans were on the island, and to our great joy they soon made their appearance; but of all the men we ever saw, these were certainly the most wicked looking fellows, and they soon gave us proof they were as bad as they appeared to be. One of them was an Irishman, named John Kennelly, the other Benjamin Ambler, of London. They told us a strange story respecting their coming to these islands, but this was a matter of little consequence to us, firmly believing that the Lord had sent them as our interpreters; for, though we had provided as we thought, sufficient instruments for the purpose, by bringing Peter and two Otaheiteans with us, we should have been much at a loss, the language differing so much, that they could not understand one word in ten; but these two men, Ambler and Kennelly, who had been only thirteen months on the island, speak the language well. After some time our business was partly told them. They readily agreed to give all the assistance in their power. After giving them and the chiefs presents, they all went on shore,

apparently highly satisfied. Very early the next morning we were surrounded with a prodigious number of single canoes, beside ten or twelve large double ones. From the peaceable manner they left us the night before, we had not the least suspicion, until the two Europeans came and told us they intended to take the ship. This you may easily conceive alarmed us very much. We got the people to their quarters as privately as possible. After getting thus ready we scaled two of our guns; on this the large canoes began to sheer off, and a number of single ones followed. Whether their intention was really to attack us we know not—but it was very alarming to see so many canoes and people round the vessel presenting their clubs and spears for sale, which might in a moment be turned against us.

" Our fears in a great measure being done away, Ambler pointed out four chiefs which he said were the only ones we need care for. Tibo Mamoe, the present king, was then at the point of death, and his son Tugahowe, the least of the four, would certainly succeed his

father, (which afterwards proved to be so,) he would therefore recommend the missionaries being placed under his care. After talking with them on the subject they readily agreed to go. I told them they could not expect to keep their chests, and if they were the least afraid I would take them back to Otaheite. Their answer was, the property was only a secondary object with them, that they would go in a humble dependance on that God who had brought them safe over the mighty ocean, and had enabled them to leave their country and their friends. After a most solemn season in prayer, six of them went with the chief, and Ambler; but not before they promised they should want for nothing. The other chiefs wanted each to have one, but we thought it best for the present they should all be together, promising them that when the ship returned, if they then chose to separate, each should have some of them—this satisfied them all. Having received various presents, they all went on shore before dark, and all the canoes left us. The next morning we weighed and ran

further out, that we might have plenty of room in case of an attack. About noon, two of the missionaries returned with the pleasing intelligence that the natives did not attempt to steal, but treated them with the greatest respect. We then loaded the canoes with the remainder of their things, and with such stores as they thought they should want.

"We now got under weigh, to endeavour to find a channel to the westward of the spot where captain Cook got a-ground. After some time a very good one was found, which we sailed through. This we conceived to be a valuable acquisition, as we should now, in case of being attacked, be able to sail out of the harbour, either to the east or west. Being now without the reefs, we intended to spend two or three days to see how the natives would behave to our people; but the Lord saw fit to send us a smart gale from the north-west, so that at day-light we found ourselves in a critical situation, not being able to weather the reefs on either tack; but to our comfort we just fetched the channel

which we had discovered only the day before, and thus we narrowly escaped shipwreck. Before we cleared the harbour, we were nearly cast away a second time. What cause have we to praise our God for thus preserving us in such imminent danger! Having now cleared the harbour, April the 16th, we made the best of our way towards the Marquesas, with the only two missionaries on board, Messrs. Harris and Crook. The fair wind lasted six days, and was succeeded by hard gales from the eastward, so that on the 6th day of May, we were only in 206 degrees of longitude and 39 degrees of south latitude.

"On the 23rd of May we discovered two islands on which we endeavoured to land, but the natives from their hostile disposition prevented us. We named one the Crescent, from its shape, the other after Sir Charles Middleton: they lay in latitude 23° 12′ south, and in longitude 226° 15′ east. The next day we discovered another, which we named after admiral Gambier, latitude 21° 36′, longitude 225° 40′ east; and on May the 29th, discovered another, which we

called after our friend Mr. Searle; latitude 18° 18′ south, longitude 224° 12′ east. On the 4th of June, made the island Christiana, and the next day anchored in Resolution Bay, after a long disagreeable passage of fifty days. Our rigging being now in a bad state, it was necessary to get it on deck. I shall only remark, that on getting the fore-shrouds down, we found two of them gone, so that had we been on the starboard tack instead of the larboard, during the gales we had in this passage, we must have been dismasted. O what cause of gratitude for all His kindness to us! We no sooner arrived than we were visited by many of the natives, and amongst them the chief, whom, after a few visits, we gave to understand that the two missionaries were to stay with him. On hearing this he could not contain himself, but jumped about the cabin for joy. He said they should have a house, and that they should never want while he had to give. The young lad, Crook, went immediately with the chief, but Harris staid on board to get the things ready, as he said; however, I am

sorry to say in this place, that though he was the first that proposed coming to these islands, and was the cause of two others not coming, he seemed now to have lost his missionary spirit, which was visible to every one. After a little time he went on shore, but with such a gloomy countenanee, that the natives soon took a dislike to him. The youth on the contrary was cheerful and obliging, so that the whole village was remarkably fond of him. In consequence of this I was under the necessity of carraying Harris back to Otaheite. I would have brought Crook away likewise, but he begged to be left, which was agreed to, and I have no doubt but he will prove a blessing to those poor good-natured heathens.

"Having now refitted our rigging, supplied Crook with every thing needful, we took an affectionate leave of each other, and sailed for Otaheite on the 27th of June. In our way we took a view of Trevenen's and Sir Henry Martin's Islands; and arrived in Matavia the 6th of July, when I found them all well I began dividing their property, which I

found a very disagreeable task, this took up all the time I was here, but I got through it apparently much to their satisfaction.

"Having now completed our business, we took leave of our dear friends and the kind natives, the 4th of August, and touched at Huahine, which was in a dreadful state, owing to their wars. From this we made Palmerston Island, and planted bread-fruit, plantains, and Ava trees; and on the 18th of August, anchored off Tongataboo, nearly in our old birth. We were soon visited by our dear people, who informed us they were all well, except one; and how the Lord had preserved them from the machinations of their countrymen, who had done all in their power to make the poor heathen destroy them; and that some of them had separated, (under different chiefs,) with a view to counteract their villainous plots. During my stay, Messrs. Buchanan and Galton went to live with another chief, which I trust will be the means not only of gaining their affections, but will likewise facilitate the knowledge of the language, which is of

the greatest importance. After doing every thing in our power with the chiefs, and dividing the articles, we parted with many tears on both sides. I brought away Mr. Nobbs, by their advice, as he had not his health from the time he landed. Our intention was now to touch at the Fegee Islands, and if possible to have some intercourse with the natives.

"On the 7th of September, we left Tongataboo, and on the 9th, in the evening, made the Fegees; but after six days toil, trying to find anchorage, we were under the necessity of quitting them without finding any, or having any intercourse with the natives; yet not before we struck on a coral rock, but got off without receiving any damage. I believe no islands in the world are so hemmed in by dangerous reefs. We got into the middle of them, and we have reason to be thankful we got out in the manner we did. In steering to the westward, we made the Island Ruttuma, and had a little intercourse with the natives, who seem to be of the same race with the Friendly Islanders; they talk the same language, and their canoes

are of the same construction. From thence we intended making the best of our way to the Pelews, but from variable winds and calms we did not reach them till the 7th of November, and then from the stormy appearance of the weather, we did not think it prudent to stay; after a little intercourse with the natives, therefore, we proceeded on our way to this port, with a view to send you intelligence, if possible, by the first ship. We found on our arrival at Macao, which was the 21st of November, that we could not proceed to Wampoo, without an authority from the Hoppo, because we had no cargo. Finding a ship had been detained a month, I went to Canton, by which means we got permission the fourteenth day we anchored at Wampoo. There are three of the last ships ready for sea, but I prefer sending you this by a Danish ship—there are four direct ships arrived. My nephew received a few lines from you and Mr. Fenn, but I have not yet received any; three of the packets are not yet up, yet I could not think of losing this opportunity.

"This brief relation, I hope will be satisfactory to all our dear friends, but you must make great allowance for the writer. Shall conclude with only observing, that as our work has been great, having been eleven months out of fourteen at sea, the wear of the sails, &c. has been in proportion. We never split a sail, nor carried away a mast. The seamen and officers are in the ship, all well, except one seaman, who ran from the ship. I can give you no idea when we shall leave this place. To me it is the worst part of my voyage, having to associate with the professed enemies of my Lord, and frequently I am the butt of the whole company.

"May the Lord increase your zeal, and present you with such instruments as he will own and bless. This is, and ever will be the sincere prayer of,

"Dear Sir,

"Your affectionate Servant,

"J. Wilson."

Before the captain left the islands, he received general and many individual testimonies of the affection and grati-

tude of the missionaries. Those at Tongataboo, being the last island he visited, wrote to him on his leaving the South Seas, the following kind and grateful letter—

"Tongataboo, September 5, 1797.

"DEAR SIR,

"As the period is just at hand when we are to bid a long farewell to each other, perhaps never more to meet on this side eternity, we should consider ourselves as inexcusable if we did not address a few lines to you, expressive of the grateful sense we entertain of the many and kind offices you have rendered us. We recollect with pleasure, the time when we first heard of your intention to forego every thing that might render your native country dear to you, in order to conduct us to the place of our destination, and with pleasure we acknowledge that we have often, when addressing the throne of grace, found ourselves delightfully and powerfully constrained to adore and bless our heavenly Father on your account, whom we have considered, and do still con-

sider, a truly valuable gift of Providence to the Missionary Society.

"The many instances in which we have found you a faithful and friendly adviser; your kind endeavours to render our long voyage as agreeable as possible, and the attention you have paid to our interests before and since your return to this place, call upon us to express to you our most lively gratitude. May the Lord return into your own bosom a hundred fold for every expression of your kindness towards us. Dear sir, we trust you will not look upon this as fulsome adulation; no, far be it from us to commit such a crime; believe us, these are the real sentiments of our minds, and could you look into our hearts, you would see more than we can express.

"The most important part of your voyage is now finished, and you are about to return to your native land. May that God who has been with you, and delivered you out of so many dangers, still be with you; may you experience his supporting, comforting, and reviving presence continually; and may

he enable you to rejoice in the comfortable assurance that your name is written in heaven. In return for your kindness and prayers for us, we will not be unmindful of you in our addresses to the Father of mercies. Our social meetings, our private retirements, shall witness the sincerity of our desires for your welfare, both temporal and spiritual; and we cannot but acknowledge the pleasure we feel from the consideration that we have not a wish for your welfare, but which you can return with equal warmth of affection. May the Lord bless you to the end of a useful life, and cause you to experience an increasing meetness for his heavenly kingdom, till the blissful moment arrive when every earthly object shall disappear, and the shining glories of the future world shall open to your enlightened and enlarged soul in such a manner, as would in this frail state, quite overwhelm it.

" Adieu, dear sir, till we meet in those happy mansions where we shall no more say farewell—till then, believe us to be your sincere well-wishers, and

thankful and obliged servants in the gospel of Christ,

"D. Bowell, Secretary.

"To Captain Wilson, on board the Ship Duff."

Though the captain met with considerable ridicule in China on account of his religious enthusiasm, yet his business was facilitated beyond precedent. He expected to be detained there at least three months; but Mr. Hall, the head supercargo, informed the captain that as the ship was reported to be in excellent order, and fit to receive a cargo, if he could be ready in five or six days to receive his lading, he would dispatch him. By the kindness of the other supercargo also, the difficulties usually thrown in the way by the Chinese were easily surmounted. The ship was dispatched in a shorter time than had ever been known before; for, though these gentlemen smiled at the captain's religious zeal, they could not but admire his benevolent philanthropy, and therefore readily expedited his business. The ship was ready just in time to sail with the first ships that were leaving China.

The singularity of the manners of the officers and ship's company while at Canton, excited attention. All immorality being utterly discountenanced, not an oath sworn, and an unusual devotion maintained, induced those in the ships whose company they had joined, to give the Duff a new name: they called her '*The Ten Commandments.*'

The ship left China, the 3rd of December, 1797, and arrived after a safe and pleasant passage at the Cape of Good Hope, on the 17th of March, 1798. Here the ships of war impressed some sailors from the other ships, but none from the Duff. They sailed from the Cape on the 1st of April; touched at St. Helena on the 15th; on the 24th of June put into Cork for convoy, and under the protection of the Ethalion, captain Countess, the Duff arrived safe, and all well, in the river Thames, on the 11th of July. In a few days the cargo of teas was discharged in as perfect a state as when received at China.

"Thus," says the captain to his minister in a letter off Dover, "has our God wafted us from place to place in

a most wonderful manner, having sailed nearly fifty thousand miles since we left you, in little more than one year and nine months. I may say with Naomi, I went out full, but the Lord has brought me home again empty. Yet, not without being able to say, I think with sincerity, 'The prosperity of Zion lies near my heart.'" Experience had taught the captain his deficiencies, and the necessity of an habitual dependance on divine grace.

The return of the Duff, and the brief but interesting account of the voyage published by the directors, excited an unusual degree of attention, and of gratitude to God among the friends of the Missionary Society; while the admiration of the conduct of the captain was the subject of almost universal conversation. The fervour of pleasurable feeling glowed in every bosom, and darted from individual to individual like an electric shock.

The directors in their special report on this occasion, observe, "The safe return of the Duff, the health which prevailed on board during the whole voyage,

the welcome reception and safe settlement of the missionaries at the places of their destination, and the remarkable interpositions of Divine Providence from beginning to end of this remarkable enterprize, were such evident answers to the numerous prayers which had been offered up to God on behalf of the mission, as loudly demanded the most public acknowledgment of gratitude and praise.

"The directors, therefore, of the Missionary Society, having acquainted the friends of the Institution, as soon as they possibly could, with the leading circumstances of the voyage, requested that a day of public thanksgiving might be observed on the 6th of August, being the first Monday in the month, when the prayer-meetings of the Society are usually held throughout the kingdom, that all whose hearts have been interested in the work, might have an opportunity of uniting at the same time, in the same pleasing and reasonable service; they appointed Mr. Griffin of Portsea, to whose church captain Wilson belonged, to preach on the occasion at

Surrey Chapel in the morning, and Dr. Haweis, as being one of the oldest ministers in the direction, and who first proposed the mission to the Pacific Ocean, to preach at Zion chapel in the evening. These extensive places were soon filled with serious and respectable auditories.—The whole services were conducted with the utmost solemnity, the presence of God was happily experienced by preachers and hearers; and never, perhaps, was gratitude more warmly expressed on any public occasion."

Dr. Haweis in his thanksgiving sermon, expressed his admiration in glowing eloquence. "In this voyage," he observes, "to tell of all His wonders, my time would fail, and my ability be unequal; I will just refresh your memory with the following hints of some of the great things done for us, in the swiftness, the safety, the health, and success of the voyage.

"The *swiftness* of the passage. This will be the admiration of every nautical man by profession. Who ever heard, in the most prosperous voyage of the ablest

navigators, 183 degrees of longitude passed in the short space of fifty-one days? Moving often at the rate of two hundred and twenty or thirty miles a day, and so steadily before the wind as seldom ever to interrupt the daily exercises of prayer and praise, of study, or repose.

"Shall we not with thankfulness admire the *safety* of the conveyance? Not a mast sprung, not a yard lost, not a sail split, not an anchor left behind! To traverse more than twice the circumference of the globe—especially amidst lurking shoals, the hidden rocks, and low islands of the Southern Ocean, must it is well known be full of danger. They felt it, and sometimes were at their wit's end—going up to heaven and sinking down into the deep—shook by the pealing thunder—embayed without a passage, and once suspended on the dreadful reef. I read and trembled. But he that dwelleth under the defence of the Most High, shall be safe under the shadow of the Almighty. I was ashamed, humbled, comforted, exulted, when in the midst of the most awful scenes I

hear one of my brethren, 'We took the wings of faith and fled in prayer to the God of our mercies, and when we had sung an hymn, presently the storm abated, and we lay down comfortably and fell asleep.' Ah! 'So he giveth his beloved sleep.'

"Shall we not gratefully notice their *health*. What a miracle of mercy hath our vessel been! Of about sixty persons during nearly a two years' voyage, not one has been lost: not only a hair of their head hath not perished, but those who have returned are "fat and well-liking;" and almost every man and woman are reported in better health than when they left the shores of their nativity. What disease, misery, and famine, have we not often heard of in voyages of far less extent and duration? The great Physician had determined that the inhabitants of his ark should not complain 'I am sick.' Few vessels have ever been so long without touching for refreshments, or performed so vast a run, as 13,800 miles without the sight of land; but except the common well-known effects of the sea, or

the indisposition of one individual, not a scorbutic complaint appeared, no spreading fever, no infectious disorder, no dangerous accident, nor broken bone. Passing through climates so different—tender women and children, many who had never seen the sea till they embarked upon it, unaccustomed to such food or accommodation, they reached Otaheite, after a five months voyage, without an individual sick. All the way they had plenty of provisions, their water sweet, abundant, and never failing, and not a creature wanting any manner of thing that was good. Whilst we record the mighty acts of the Lord let future voyagers learn from captain Wilson what care, cleanliness, proper food, and unremitted attention can, under the divine benediction, do for the health of those 'who occupy their business in great waters.'"

An account of the voyage was published by order of the directors for the benefit of the society, written principally by Mr. William Wilson, the chief officer, with a number of beautiful views, and instructive maps and charts. Prefixed

is a scientific discourse on the geography and history of the South Sea islands where the missionaries have settled. Appended to the voyage is a detailed account of the natural and civil state of Otaheite never before published. The whole composed from the papers of the captain, Mr. Wilson, and the missionaries, under the superintendance of a committee of directors appointed for the purpose.

This handsome volume was dedicated to the king, and presented to his majesty by the Rev. Dr. Haweis, rector of Aldwinkle; the Rev. David Bogue, tutor of the missionary academy; and Mr. Chapman, the bookseller, in Fleet-street, gave to the society two thousand pounds for the copyright of this volume, of which twelve thousand six hundred copies were printed of the first edition. The directors received from the East India company for the freight of teas from China four thousand one hundred pounds; so that, though the voyage was a considerable expense to the society, these items, together with the value of the ship after her return, reduced it to a very moderate

sum indeed; for after making a large allowance for the value of the presents sent by the friends of the society for the missionaries and the natives not entered in the account current, the whole expense of bringing the missionaries from their various places of residence, fitting them out, furnishing them with books and various utensils, conveying them to the utmost extent of the globe, and affording them ample stores in the islands, did not amount to the sum of one hundred and forty pounds for each individual missionary and his wife. This statement is due to the memory of the captain, as a proof that as the directors had resolved to send missionaries to the South Seas, his services were a real benefit to the society.

As a token of the society's gratitude to the captain, and as a lasting memorial of it in his family, an elegant representation of the public interview of the king and queen of Otaheite, and other principal persons, with the captain and the missionaries, was painted by Smirk, and presented to him by the directors.

His friend, Dr. Haweis, who had from

the first felt deeply interested in the South Sea mission, and had given five hundred pounds to the society specifically in aid of that mission, presented the captain with a diamond ring of considerable value accompanied with the following note—

"MY DEAR CAPTAIN,

"Anxious for your arrival I had prepared the following little token. I wish to couple my name with yours. The circle is the emblem of the eternity I hope to spend with you. The brilliant is not brighter than my affection, nor the gold purer than my friendship. Wear me on your heart, whilst mine beats it will remember you, and bless God for you.

"Yours, ever,

T. HAWEIS."

"Lady Ann Erskine desires particular respects and congratulation."

To have expected immediate, rapid, and extensive success in the work of evangelizing the inhabitants of the South Sea islands would have been the extreme of unreasonable enthusiasm. A people

whose language had never been arranged into a system, nor ever reduced to writing—whose governments were mutable as the human passions—subject often to the whim or caprice of the next most athletic and daring chief—whose religion was supported by the most inhuman and cruel rites; and whose manners were but a few degrees above the state of the brutes, and in many things below them, for they protect and nourish their young, but the South Sea islanders often destroy their infants to save themselves the trouble of nursing them—they sacrifice their defenceless neighbours to appease their gods—and eat the flesh of their enemies to save their hogs—such a people were not easily or speedily to be civilized, and brought under the influence of the rational, orderly, and ennobling virtues of christianity. These are not reasons why the attempt to evangelize them should not have been made, nor why it should not be zealously and perseveringly continued, but the reverse; they are reasons however why we should not be too sanguine in our expectation of success, nor discouraged by partial disappointments.

Though the obstacles to success were very great and numerous, and the mission was under a dark cloud for some years, yet it is pleasing to observe that the cloud is now dispersed, and an auspicious sun begins to beam upon those benighted heathens. The missionaries have not only introduced several of the useful arts and habits of civilization, but they have reduced the language to a standard by forming a grammar, and a pretty extensive vocabulary of words and phrases. They have translated into the language an account of the life of Christ and his apostles in the words of the New Testament, and also a catechism; these have been printed either in New South Wales or in London. They have also translated the Gospel of the evangelist Luke, which is now ready for the press. They have established schools which are regularly attended; the king and others have learnt the arts of reading and writing, but what is most highly interesting, the king has received the truths of christianity and professes to love them. He has written several letters to the missionaries describing his views of himself as a

sinner, his desires of salvation through Jesus Christ, and his earnest concern to live a life of holiness. The originals of these letters in the hand-writing of king Pomarre are in the possession of the directors in London. They are inserted here in the translation given of them by the missionaries as a specimen of the literature and religion of the king of Otaheite. The missionaries who had been under the necessity of flying from Otaheite to Port Jackson in consequence of the civil wars, returned to Eimeo, an island adjacent to Otaheite, and accompanied these letters, with the following, to the directors;—

"Island of Eimeo, Oct. 21, 1812.

"HON. FATHERS AND BRETHREN,

"We, your undersigned missionaries, after a grievous dispersion and absence from these islands, and the variety of gloomy occurrences relative to the mission which beclouded our prospects and grieved our hearts, being by the good hand of our God upon us, mercifully preserved in the perils, hazards, and changing scenes through which we have

been led since our leaving these islands, and now brought back to them in safety, and permitted again to combine our efforts for the accomplishment of the grand object of the mission, and having, (glory be to God,) our prospects in some measure brightened, our hopes exalted, and our hearts encouraged by an event, which you will no doubt with us deem of great importance in itself, and portending a happy result of our missionary labours; we take the earliest opportunity of making this known to you, and of giving you a statement of our circumstances, and the state of the mission. The event to which we allude is the conversion of king Pomarre to christianity, a circumstance which no doubt will cause your hearts, and the hearts of all true friends of Christ who may hear of it, to rejoice.

"On the 18th of July he came to us and offered himself a candidate for christian baptism, declaring it his fixed purpose and determination to cleave to Jehovah the true God, and to his people, expressing his desire and willingness to receive further instruction in the things

of God, and requesting us to pray for him. He gave us to understand that this resolution was the result of long and increasing conviction of the truth and excellency of our religion. Much interesting conversation took place on this occasion too tedious here to relate at large; however we must mention some of it. He said he had been endeavouring to persuade his father-in-law, Tamatoa, and Tapoa, the two principal chiefs of the leeward islands, to take the same step he was taking, but that they told him he might do as he pleased; as for them they would cleave to ORA; which he observed was cleaving to Satan; and said that if no one else would hear us, or embrace our religion, he would, as he desired to be happy after death, and be saved in the judgment day. On our observing that we did not cease to pray to God for him, and that it would rejoice us much to see him sincerely and truly given up in heart to God, and that, if that was the case, he might then be baptized; he replied, that we could not know his heart, nor he our's, but that He who made us men knew our hearts, and whe-

ther we spoke truth or falsehood to each other. Indeed he introduced the subject at first by saying, 'You do not know the thoughts of my heart, but God does.' We informed him that it was customary for those who offered themselves as candidates for baptism from among the heathen to be for some time further instructed in the things of God, and their conduct inspected, that it might be known whether they had truly forsaken every evil way, and were really turned in heart to God before they were baptized; all which he seemed to approve of, observing that he was willing to do as we thought proper; and that he left the affair of his baptism entirely with us as to the time. Another thing he proposed during this conversation must not be omitted, namely, the erection of a building for the worship of God; and on being told that perhaps it would be better to defer the building till his and our affairs should be more settled, he replied, 'Let us not mind these, let it be built at all events.' However, his removal to Taheite prevents this for the present. Indeed it is a circumstance we much re-

gret, as it deprives him of the means of grace and instruction, except by letter, and exposes him to many and great temptations. However, thanks be to God, we learn from his letters and verbal accounts of him, that he strictly observes the christian sabbath, and perseveres in an open profession of his new religion before the chiefs and people; and for which we understand he has already experienced a considerable degree of persecution notwithstanding his dignity.

"That you may form a judgment for yourselves of the present state of his mind, we send you with this two of his late letters, with a translation of them.

"We remain, honoured fathers and brethren, your brethren and humble servants in the gospel for Christ's sake,

"W. Henry. H. Bicknell.
"C. Wilson. J. Davies.
"W. Scott. H. Nott."
"H. Hayward.

"Papeite, Taheite, Friday, Sept. 25, 1812.

"DEAR FRIENDS,

"May Jehovah and Jesus Christ, may the Three-One, our only trust and Saviour, bless you! May the anger of

Jehovah towards me be appeased, who am a wicked man, guilty of accumulated crimes—of regardlesness and ignorance of the true God, and of an obstinate perseverance in wickedness! May Jehovah give me his good Spirit to sanctify my heart, that I may love what is good, and that I may be enabled to put away all my evil customs, and become one of his people, and be saved through Jesus Christ our only Saviour; you indeed will be saved, you are become the people of God, but I may be banished to hell; God may not regard me: I am a wicked man, and my sins are great and accumulated (or collected) together. But O that we may all be saved through Jesus Christ. May the anger of God towards us all be appeased; for all of us have been disobedient to him as our Lord and Master. Look at the beasts, they are all obedient to man as their lord and master; but we have not obeyed our Lord and Master. Surely we are fools! May the Three-One save us!"

"*To the Missionaries at Moorea, Eimeo.*"

"MY DEAR FRIENDS,

"War will perhaps soon commence in

the district of Papara. We are listening to the reports to find out whether they are true or not. Should war not take place, it will be through fear of us. Enomatua is at the head of one party, and Arutapoea and his brother Tate at the head of the other. Should Enomatua be banished from Papara all Taheite will be involved in war. In this case I shall take Enomatua's part, and the Poreoniice, (which includes all the districts from Isthmus to Tepaeriei,) will join me. Papara and part of Atahuru are for banishing Enomatua; but Tacarabei and Fäa, and part of Atahuru, wish to be neuter. We are aware that this war is on our account, and designed to involve us. Perhaps you do not know Enomatua, nor Arutapoea, the brother of Tate, who came from Reiatea with Tapoa and party.

"Tapoa is at the point of death; he can eat nothing, and knows nobody.

"I am ill myself, and have no appetite for food. I was taken ill about three o'clock on Monday last. My affliction is great; but if I can only obtain God's favour before I die I shall count

myself well off. But, O! should I die with my sins unpardoned it will be ill indeed with me. O! may my sins be pardoned, and my soul saved through Jesus Christ! And may Jehovah regard me before I die, and then I shall rejoice, because I have obtained the favour of Jehovah.

"May Jehovah and Jesus Christ bless us all.

"POMARRE."

"Papeite, Taheite, Oct. 8, 1812.

"MY DEAR FRIENDS,

"May Jehovah and Jesus Christ our Saviour bless you. If it had not been for the mercy of God towards us we should all have been cut off long ago. Had it pleased God to have given us up to the will of Satan he would long ago have destroyed us all. To the Three-One we owe our preservation and salvation. O Jehovah save us! O Jesus Christ save us!

"Nothing bad *(referring to the war)* is talked of at Taheite at present; if it were otherwise I would not remain here: there is one thing that fills me with

horror, which I will inform you of by and by. Satan perhaps is the author of it; he is envious of me. May Jesus Christ save me.

"The affairs of Taheite are pretty well settled, the chiefs having sent professions of subjection; but how long this will continue is uncertain. However, at present all is well.

"I continue to pray to God without ceasing. Regardless of other things, I am concerned only that my soul may be saved by Jesus Christ! It is my earnest desire that I may become one of Jehovah's people, and that God may turn away his anger from me, which I deserve for my wickedness—my ignorance of him, and my accumulated crimes!

"If God were pleased to create all mankind anew, then they would be good. This is my desire, that God would enable me from my heart to love that which is good, and to abhor that which is evil; and that I may be saved by Jesus Christ. My dear friends write to me that I may know your minds. Inform me also of the news from Port Jackson, and whether king George is alive or dead.

"May Jehovah and Jesus Christ our Saviour bless you!

"POMARRE."

"*To the Missionaries at Morea, Eimeo.*"

'The king wrote again to the missionaries in the same strain in February, 1814; and in September of the same year the missionaries inform the directors that the mission was increasingly successful both at Eimeo and at Otaheite, (as called in Cook's and other voyages, but Taheite, as called by the natives; the letter O being dropped as only having something of the force of an article.) The example of the king in publicly renouncing the idol gods and false religion of his country, and declaring his full conviction of the truth, superiority, and excellency of our religion, has had a powerful influence upon the minds of many. Several have been removed by death, leaving very satisfactory evidences of their having been truly converted to God by the gospel through the influence of the Holy Spirit. A meeting for prayer has been formed at

Taheite without the interference or knowledge of the missionaries at the time. At Eimeo a society is formed of more than forty natives who have renounced their idol-worship and wicked customs, and who profess to worship the one living and true God, and to be desirous to be saved by the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Rev. Mr. Marsden, the principal chaplain to the colony of New South Wales, and a magistrate, writes to the directors, dated May the 17th, 1814, as follows: "I have sent you several letters from the missionaries at Otaheite. I am exceedingly happy to hear that the good work is begun among the natives, and that many have renounced their idols, and have turned unto the living and true God. The private letters from the brethren are very gratifying to my feelings. The Lord will establish his kingdom in their islands: the way is gradually opening. You have some of the best of men in my opinion as missionaries, whose hearts are wholly engaged in the great work."

From these interesting facts it appears that the labours and sacrifices of the

captain, the society, and the missionaries, have not been in vain. The morning now begins to brighten on these long benighted lands. The desert at last buds, and will soon blossom as the rose. Some of the redeemed spirits from those distant isles of the sea have entered into bliss as the first fruits of the Spirit, and certain presages of the goodly number who shall one day surround the throne with joyful acclamations, and unceasing strains of gratitude to God, for the blessings derived from the exertions of the Missionary Society. Already have the blessed spirit of the captain, and the glorified spirits from the islands mingled their joyful hallelujahs to God and the Lamb, and sung in elevated tones "unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

I shall finish this part in the language of the writers of the missionary voyage.

"We cannot but flatter ourselves that the public, on an impartial survey of what has been done, will consider the

Missionary Society as among the real benefactors to mankind; and support an undertaking which God has hitherto singularly blessed, and which proposes, as its first object, the divine glory, and the salvation, temporal and eternal, of those whom hitherto no man has cared for. Names, sects, and parties have no place among us—we mean nothing political, partial, or exclusive. One is our Master, even Christ. We desire to know and teach nothing but him crucified; to interfere in no contest, to disturb no government established, nor to introduce any peculiar modes of worship, but to leave every man to the book of truth for his guide in the spirit of meekness; to unite in one centre, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and to love one another out of a pure heart fervently. Time and better information, it is hoped, will dissipate every prejudice entertained against so benevolent an undertaking."

PART IV.

From the settling of the captain in London, after the Missionary Voyage, to the time of his death.

THERE is a special sphere of action, suited to the talents, dispositions, and habits of individuals, in which their excellencies concentrate, and shine in a pre-eminent degree, but out of which they often appear inferior to men of ordinary capacities. Captain Wilson was so deeply sensible of the truth of this position, and so naturally diffident of his own opinion on subjects not within the range of his immediate profession, that he sought and sighed for retirement, even from the business and bustle of the Missionary Society. Accustomed to the manners of an East India merchant and captain, he felt himself incompetent to take any useful share in those popular meetings, or among untrained societies, where it often happens that the most unqualified persons to decide or act, are for a time the most prominent, and where they obtrude their opi-

nions upon all subjects that come before them, with equal confidence and vociferation. He had not, perhaps, been sufficiently enured to the free discussions of voluntary societies and the unrestrained animadversions of a body of independent individuals, to feel, after the storms of a protracted debate, the serenity of a summer's evening, which thousands in the metropolis and in this land of freedom, are accustomed to feel. But though this might have had some influence in preventing his making himself prominent in the religious societies in London, yet his retirement arose principally from other causes.

He was chosen from time to time on the direction of the affairs of the Missionary Society, but did not make a point of attending, unless when he thought his mercantile, geographical, or nautical knowledge could be used to advantage, and then he never withheld his presence or his opinions, whenever his health would admit of his attendance. After the captain's return from the South Seas, he resided in London for some time, his niece, as before, having

the superintendance of his domestic concerns. The effects of a sedentary life after a long sea voyage, soon manifested themselves in a very serious bilious attack, which indicated a morbid affection of the liver, and in his own opinion threatened his life. In this state of body he possessed great pleasure and comfort of mind. He felt that he had lived to accomplish an important object, and he was therefore not unwilling to die; but, He who had fixed the bounds of his habitation, added nearly twenty years more to his life. He felt himself very subject to frequent attacks of the same, or similar complaints, which made him very cautious as to his regimen, and often prevented his being out at the meetings of the directors, because of the evening air.

The same unerring Providence which had guided him by a right way through the whole journey of life, now led him to a city of habitation, by uniting him with a rich and respectable family on Denmark Hill, and placing him under the pastoral care of the Rev. George Clayton, of Walworth.

Immediately on his return from India, he manifested a benevolent concern to advance the interest of several relatives, the descendants of two of his brothers, and it was his aim, after his return from the missionary voyage, to promote the same object. One of these had obtained a respectable wine trade in London, and afterwards entered into extensive mercantile engagements. The captain, out of pure kindness to his relative, advanced several thousand pounds in aid of his capital. These sums being in jeopardy from the state of the times, to save them and to rescue his friend and relative from the gulph which he perceived opening beneath him, he advanced some thousands more. Besides these loans to his relative, he likewise made some, of nearly or quite sixteen thousand pounds to another individual in part connected with his relative, and as he conceived, principally for his benefit. He continued to make advances in order to save the former sums, till in consequence of what has been called the second South Sea bubble, or the failures of the British merchants in the ship-

ments to South America, his relative failed for a vast sum of money, and the other person was incapable of meeting the captain's demands upon him, so that all the advantages of some years fatigue in the Indies, besides what he received with Mrs. Wilson, and what was left him by Mr. Holbert, his father-in-law, a sum in the whole little short of thirty thousand pounds, were all swallowed up by the adventurous engagements of one whom he from pure friendship most earnestly wished to serve.

Though through the kindness of a munificent Providence, he still possessed an ample fortune for his children, in the right of Mrs. Wilson; he had nothing at his own disposal that he thought would admit of leaving to any of his friends the least testimony of former friendship, however endearing, or of long standing. Though his loss deprived him of none of the comforts of life or the means of making a respectable appearance in society, yet it was an event that tried his mind in a very considerable degree, not only on his own account, but also on account of his family and

those relatives who had partaken of his kindness, but from whom he now thought himself called in a great measure to withhold his benevolence in future. This part of domestic calamity would not have been thus particularized, but as it serves to shew that remarkable events of Providence attended him even to the last, and that all human possessions are mutable and uncertain. But it is mentioned principally because it appears necessarily due to his memory; for the general report of his possessing a very ample fortune, naturally induced the friends of religion to expect from him a liberality to the cause of God, in some measure corresponding with his riches and his former professions of zeal for the welfare of that cause. This event not only prevented any testamentary tokens of concern for that Society and cause, to which he had been such a prominent and zealous friend, but it limited his ability for extensive benevolence during the greater part of his residence near London.

To describe a man without faults, is in the esteem of all that know human

nature, even in its most improved state, to discredit the whole account. There are few days so clear as to be without a cloud; even the luminary of day itself has some dark spots on its disk.

The captain's temper was naturally reserve, and though softened and rendered affable by divine grace, yet at times, it partook of something bordering on hauteur. This, as it was his fault, was to himself the cause of considerable suffering; he often lamented to the writer that he had not sufficiently known his own character; for, said he, had any one informed me, after I returned from the South Sea Mission, when my fortune was all safe in the English funds, that any thing would have induced me to venture it on any mercantile engagement or individual security, I should have smiled at his ignorance of my character, and should have said, it is impossible. What he lamented as his fault was, that he had not advised with some judicious friends on the prudence or propriety of making such large advances of a pecuniary nature upon such precarious security, but more especially, that

he had never acquainted Mrs. Wilson with the extent of it, nor in any case on this subject advised with her about it. This certainly was not right; the marriage bond includes reciprocal duties and confidence as well as affection. It is an old adage, and I am persuaded generally a very true one, " A man will seldom do wrong if he consults his wife." She may lead him wrong, if the scheme be her own, but her fears and advice may be of great advantage to the husband if he listens to her, in making him reflect and examine his own designs till he is under the controul of a cautious disposition. When the failure was known, in which the whole of the captain's fortune was involved, he had the unspeakable pain of disclosing the circumstance to Mrs. Wilson and her family, in all its extent. Had it been done some time before, probably it had prevented a considerable part of the loss, and saved him from much painful anxiety. However, when she fully understood the subject, her concern was more about his feelings than their loss; and instead of making any reflections on him, she con-

soled his mind by reminding him, that every thing is from the Lord for some wise end, and that still they had a sufficiency left for them and their family, and also an interest in a covenant ordered in all things and sure. He however admitted he had unwittingly lent his aid more from feelings of benevolence and kindness, than from the dictates of his understanding. These unpleasant subjects are mentioned as admonitory events in this age of daring and imprudent speculation, in which the adventurer not only involves himself but all his connexions, and in which he himself often suffers the least.

Few lives have more clearly taught us the uncertainty of human possessions, and that we are under the controul of an invisible hand, than that of captain Wilson. A life subject to such a vast number of changes, must necessarily have excited as numerous and various feelings; these had produced in the captain's mind a deep and lively sense of the divine government. He admitted that all he possessed was by the special gift of a munificent Providence, and that

the same hand which had given, or rather lent it to him, had a right to take it again. If, however, there was in the character of this excellent man any other shade than that just mentioned, it was, perhaps, a want of a sufficient sense of his obligation to his God and Redeemer, to use a proportion of his property for his honour, and a little too much attachment to the wealth of this world. God often chastises faults in his own people, which he suffers to pass without correction in the men of the world. Christians are partakers of more exalted principles, have higher privileges, a more glorious destination, have greater obligations, and are therefore under a different discipline from unregenerate men. The cause of truth, and the salvation of the souls of men, is, under God, dependent upon the principles and actions of his own people. What he gives them, is not for themselves only, they are to be the lights of the world and the salt of the earth; they are to lay by, according as God has prospered them, for the promotion of his cause. "He that soweth sparingly

shall reap also sparingly, he that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully, and he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption." These principles are better understood, and more practically felt than they were fifty years since; but still they are not sufficiently felt by christians in general, especially by many of the richer members of the church of Christ, though there are certainly many happy exceptions: their liberality to the cause of God is very little when compared with that of the labouring classes of society. The word of God does not instruct us to level the distinctions which Providence has made in society. Though penuriousness may induce some so improperly to limit their expenditure, as not to afford to the labouring, manufacturing, and trading classes, that encouragement which they have a right to expect, yet the apostle Peter teaches us, that there is an external appearance of costliness even in our apparel, and of course in greater things, unbecoming persons professing godliness, which ought to be conscientiously avoided.

It has often been a question of conscience with many, what is the portion which persons should appropriate of their income to the cause of God and the poor? A countess of Warwick, many years ago, in reply to a question proposed by her on this subject to a minister, received for answer, "It is hard, if not impossible, to fix a rule which can hold universally, and that the circumstances in which persons stand with respect to their yearly income, their dependencies, and emergent occasions inevitably occurring, must all be considered:" but when urged by her for a more direct reply, as the question respected her own case, he suggested that a seventh part would be a fit proportion of her income to devote to charitable uses; she immediately informed him that she had resolved never to give less than one third. Some think from a seventh of our time being required for God, that a seventh of our property should be devoted to him, yet, as in the case of the countess, even this would not give scope to the feelings, and comprehend the abilities of some. Others think from

the tenth of the income being appropriated as early as the call of Abraham, that less should not be appropriated now under the gospel dispensation. We must admit with the adviser of the countess of Warwick, that no rule can be presented that will universally apply; yet a tenth of the savings, or in other words, of the increase of the capital of an individual, after all domestic and other expenses are discharged cannot in general either injure the man, his family, or his creditors. Though the far greater majority of christians, individually considered, give much more than this, yet it is questionable, whether this is true in the average of the ultimate savings of the christians of the present day in Great Britain; at least it is not true of many: but a careful observer of the providence of God may clearly perceive the truth of sacred writ. "There is that scattereth yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty:" this is often verified either in the person or his children.

The captain did not admit of adopting any fixed rule of benevolence; he, with

perhaps most other persons, left his benefactions to depend principally upon the number of applications. To some this may be the best method; but in the opinion of the author, which was freely given to his friend, it should be the result of a prayerful and conscientious examination of his circumstances, because the command is, "Let every one of you lay by in store, for the collection for the saints, *as God has prospered him;*" because, when once the rule is adopted and the habit formed, it prevents that grudging and carnal reasoning which naturally arise in the heart, when objects of charity are presented. If the sum to be appropriated for benevolent purposes is fixed by the individual according to some rule, the judgment has only impartially to examine the degree of excellence of each case, and the claims it has upon him. Nor is the person bound by this rule not to exercise faith, and give vent to his generous feelings in special cases, as it is not necessary that the rule should never be exceeded: but its use chiefly is, to keep the conscience and the habits up to the

principle. The tenor of these remarks was made in the presence of a valuable friend of the author's some few months since, who felt the force of them on his heart, and after mature reflection, resolved to act under their influence. After he had examined the sum which the proceeds of his business, and the interest of his monies not employed in trade, had enabled him to add to his capital in the past year; and after he had deducted the sums he had given to benevolent objects, (among which he did not reckon the subscriptions for the support of the ministry of the word, because he considered this an act of justice, not of benevolence, as he and his family partook of the advantage) he found, upon the principle of giving a tenth of his savings that he was three hundred pounds in debt to the cause of God, principally for the last year only. This sum he immediately appropriated with the knowledge and approbation of his wife to some specific objects of benevolence, but the donor is known to none but his friend. This was accompanied with a declaration, that through the strength of

Divine grace it was his design to pursue the same rule in future. This fact is recorded for the sake of example, as this person was not considered by his friends as at all deficient in liberality before.

It was remarked by many, after the captain had made so noble a sacrifice of his time and property in the missionary voyage, when it was understood that he had married a truly pious lady, the only child of a gentleman of very ample fortune; "See how God rewards his faithful servants even in this life!" But he who gave him this addition to his fortune, thought fit to wean his heart from it, and this was, perhaps, one reason why he was suffered to sustain so great a loss by the adventurous conduct of others. In either view, the providence is instructing and improving. We see how easily God can return to his people a hundred-fold in this life for what they do for his cause, and on the other side we see that if his people do not make a scriptural and benevolent use of what he gives, how easy it is for God to take it again. "Whoso is wise and will observe

these things, shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord."

This event, in a spiritual sense, proved highly beneficial to the captain. It gave him deeper discoveries of his own heart, and of the minute fulfilment of the word by the providence of God. In the October and May previous to his death, these events were the subject of very useful conversation between the captain and his friend. He observed, "In how many ways God has taught me my dependance upon him! he saw this was the most effectual way to humble my spirit, to wean me from the world, and to bring me near to himself, and I trust he has done it." The writer never left his company at the period mentioned, without feeling in a lively degree, that as iron sharpeneth iron, so does the countenance of a man his friend. The profitable reflections he made upon his own life and experience, shewed how closely he had watched his own spirit, and the advantages he had derived from the word of God.

His family afflictions and frequent personal indispositions produced retired and

domestic habits; though he was not prominent in any of the active societies in the metropolis for general usefulness, yet he improved his retirement to the benefit of his personal religion. His reading did not partake of an extensive range of subjects, but it was well employed on those of theology; he not only read, but studied the Scriptures; the word of God was his companion. Part of the day was devoted to reading the Scriptures and committing certain portions to memory, and another part to a repetition of them as he walked or rode to town, or employed himself in his garden. By this means he obtained a great richness in experimental religion. His conversation with his intimate friends was highly instructive and animating. Indeed his religious feelings were kept so much alive by this profitable train of meditation and much prayer, that he felt considerable reluctance to company, as he was often disappointed in not meeting with a correspondent disposition in others to converse on spiritual subjects. The last interview which the author had with his friend, was in the May previous

to his death, at which time, his mind was spiritual, resigned, and full of confidence of his personal interest in the blessings of the gospel. He wondered at the sovereign grace which had been manifested to him, and exulted in the glorious prospect before him.

His last illness was painful and protracted, but he bore it with great patience and fortitude, and his death was not only peaceful, but triumphant. His much respected pastor and friend, the Rev. George Clayton, preached his funeral sermon to a very respectable and crowded auditory. In this discourse, he gave an affectionate testimony to the character of his deceased friend and deacon of the church, and also an interesting account of the last closing period of a life, which, for diversity of circumstances, affecting incidents, and happy termination, has but few equals. Mr. Clayton has kindly furnished the author with the substance of this account, with permission to insert it, which is here done with the omission of a few facts already recorded in the previous part of the Memoirs.

"Such, blessed be God!" says Mr. Clayton, "is the consolation we enjoy in regard to our departed friend and brother. I must confess I feel some degree of embarrassment in speaking of him upon this occasion, because he enjoined me in his last moments to say nothing which should tend to bring him into notice. Yet this injunction, which was quite in unison with the retiring modesty of his character, had an exceptive clause relating to the glory of God and the edification of the church. It is not possible, however, to separate these points from personal allusions, when a narrative is to be given, designed to illustrate the efficacy of christian principles, in scenes of sickness and in the hour of death. Whatever it may be necessary to say of the individual, is not intended to exalt the dead, or to administer to the unprofitable curiosity of the living; but is advanced with a view to glorify the truth and grace of our Divine Master, whose we are and whom we serve. It happens that our departed friend was very extensively known in the religious world, more particularly

from the circumstance of his accepting the command of the ship Duff, a vessel fitted out at a considerable cost by the directors of the Missionary Society. On this account, some details of the concluding scenes of his christian course may very naturally be expected. I shall not attempt to enter minutely into the particulars of his early life, though his history was indeed an eventful one, because it is my aim to present him to your observation, only as he was occupied in the province of religion. Suffice it then to observe, that on his return from the voyage, in which he proved himself worthy of the trust reposed in him, his circle of connexions and friends was greatly widened. Among other familics of worth and affluence to whose acquaintance he was introduced, was that of the late Richard Holbert, Esq. of Denmark Hill, Camberwell, whose amiable and pious daughter he married in the year 1799, and found in her to his latest day a most tender and affectionate wife. Having entered upon a domestic settlement which fixed him in our immediate neighbourhood, he became an oc-

casional communicant at the table of the Lord in this place, till in the year 1805, he received a regular and honourable dismission from the Christian Society at Portsea, under the pastoral care of the Rev. J. Griffin. Subsequently to this, he was appointed to the office of deacon, by the unanimous suffrages of this religious community; an office which he continued to fill peacefully and usefully, till the time of his removal from the present world. And we can bear a thankful testimony to the manner in which our departed brother fulfilled the duties devolving on him. We are witnesses of his steady attachment to the house of God, his punctual attendance on the ordinances of divine worship, and his humble unassuming deportment amongst us. At no time has he sought to usurp undue authority, or to lord it over God's heritage. Deeply convinced of the evils of an officious and overbearing temper in dissenting churches, he never was ambitious of taking the lead, and though by no means reluctant to act, when fairly called upon, he did not misuse his office by rudely prying

into the affairs of others, nor overstep its scriptural limits by intruding into the province of the minister. If any one should incline to censure him for appearing less frequently in public societies than in former years, let the change of his circumstances and the new train of duties they brought with them, be duly weighed. While in unconnected life, without relative calls and domestic claims, he could very properly devote the greater part of his time and attention to religious objects abroad; but when he contracted those alliances which involved the various and responsible offices of a son, a husband, and a father, it certainly became him to shew piety at home.

"About ten months ago his health visibly suffered by the incroachments of an internal distemper. No very alarming symptoms however at first appeared; but as weeks and months revolved it was impossible not to observe the change which augmented disease had made in his frame and appearance. So long since as the close of the year 1813 his aspect was such as to excite the regret and ap-

prehension of all his friends, and he even then entertained some thoughts that his sickness would *probably be unto death.* Under this impression he made the following observation—"I would as soon die *now* as at any time if it were not on account of these ties (alluding to his endeared wife and his little children,) but the Lord is all-sufficient; I can trust them in the hands of that God who has been my God." The first sabbath in January, 1814, was the last in which he officiated at the table of the Lord in distributing the elements of bread and wine, and the last but one (I believe in the month of February,) in which he appeared as a worshipper in the sanctuary of God. He used to express much regret at this unavoidable detention from our public assemblies, saying, "When shall I come and appear before God?" and in the language of Hezekiah, "What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord?" a commendable feeling this in the chamber of sickness, and very unlike the temper of more some professing christians who pant ardently for a return to the places of busy traffic and mercantile concourse, and are

sooner seen there on recovery than for the courts of Jehovah—the palaces of Zion.

"It pleased God to exempt our departed brother from acute pain, of which he had only two severe paroxyms during his long protracted illness. This alleviating circumstance enabled him to employ his leisure hours in those thoughts and exercises of mind which were suited to the dispensation under which he was placed, and to the prospects which were opening before him in unparalleled grandeur and awful solemnity. As I was a near observer of the operations of his mind at this critical juncture I shall record them as they offered themselves to my notice. I marked in the first place a deep and axious *investigation* into the state of his soul. He debated the matter of his personal religion as in the light, and under the immediate eye of God. Considering the ease with which a man may deceive himself, and impose upon others by an empty and unprofitable form of godliness, he was desirous of availing himself of every assistance in ascertaining the truth of his condition. He felt perplexed

on the ground of *indwelling sin*, and for the sake of obtaining clear views, and refreshing his recollections on this important point, he read Dr. Owen's masterly treatise on the subject. On one occasion he told me he had been seriously engaged in examining the grounds and evidences of his own *conversion*, fearing lest he should take too much for granted, or regard a change of sentiment, and a reformation of manners as conversion, without the inbeing of that spiritual life, and those concomitant fruits of the Spirit, which the scriptures represent as indispensably necessary. He dwelt much on this theme, and we concluded with prayer for light, sincerity, and satisfaction. Having attained to some good degree of certainty on this momentous point, he enjoyed a *stable peace* by faith in the atonement and righteousness of Jesus Christ, and never afterwards betrayed even a momentary disquietude or alarm at the prospect or consequences of his approaching dissolution. He had been generally accustomed to repeat those lines of Dr. Haweis at the end of every day.

"One day more is past,
And the nearer my last,
To the close of my life and my labours I haste.
My strength as my day
Renewed—I stay
On Jesus my hope, and still hold on my way."

and was wont to add with peculiar emphasis and delight—

"And when my work done
My full course I have run,
And my pilgrimage finished under the sun,
To heav'n I shall soar,
Where the night is no more,
And awake to thy praise, thee ever t' adore."

"Habituated thus familiarly to converse with death he was not in the least degree dismayed by its nearer approaches. To his medical friend, and to those who occasionally visited him, he would talk with as much calmness of his departure from the world as of any transaction to which he had been accustomed while in it. On one occasion he quoted, with evident pleasure, the lines of that experimental author named above as applicable to his own case.

"Safe lodg'd my fruits, at even tide I rest;
My work near done I lean on Jesu's breast,
Wait *without fear* death's winter drawing nigh,
Preparing for my mansion in the sky."

"His indeed was a strong and unwavering faith, which swallowed up every fear, and enabled him to look at death not only without dread but with joy and triumph. The exercise of this holy principle moreover was not restricted to the concerns of his soul, which he had committed into the hands of the Redeemer, but extended also to those of his family. He was the subject of warm affections, and as a kind husband and a fond father, his little ones were closely entwined about his heart; yet through a fiducial reliance on the divine Providence he was enabled to divest himself of all the tender anxieties of a relative life, and to cast them on his God and Saviour. The struggle was painful, but faith was completely victorious. He would pray earnestly for his dear children, and express a strong desire that they might be trained up in scriptural sentiments, and thus brought to the knowledge of Christ—but it was evident that he had no disquieting care concerning them, and no prevailing wish to continue with them. The cords of earthly attachment were all loosened, and the willing spirit waited

without perturbation the signal for its flight.

"*Exemplary patience* was a distinguishing feature in the character of this dying believer. Though made to possess months of vanity, and though many wearisome nights were appointed unto him, not a murmuring word was heard to escape his lips. He justified the sovereign Disposer of events in his dealings towards him, and was rather inclined to enlarge on the subject of his mercies than his afflictions. *Charity* also to his fellow-creatures was manifestly apparent in his last hours. He declared his forgiveness of those who had injured him, and testified his good-will towards them by offering up prayers on their behalf. In this state of readiness for the hour of his departure he seemed considerably disappointed when the morning light returned and beheld him still in this vale of tears, and especially when the revolving sabbath witnessed those conflicts on earth which he longed to exchange for the *rest* and the *triumph* of heaven. Surveying the wastes of disease in his emaciated frame he exclaimed, "What a

different body will this be in the morning of the resurrection if I am found in Christ! I hope I shall be enabled to wait with patience till my change come. I am not afraid to trust my all in the hands of the despised Nazarene." To a relation who said, 'I hope you will get better,' he replied, "my hope is beyond Jordan!" At one time he repeated those lines as applicable to his own case—

"Triumphant now from sin and death,
From law and curse secure;
Peaceful I yield my parting breath,
And know my heaven is sure!"

"On the return of his pastor from an excursion in the country, of whom he had already taken a solemn, affectionate, and as it was judged, a last farewell, he expressed great surprise that we had met again in the body. "I had hoped," said he, "to have obtained my release ere this, but the messenger still delays. I desire to say, The will of the Lord be done—but I request you will pray for a speedy dismission." His nights, which for the most part were sleepless, he passed in prayer, and in the recollection

of those passages of scripture which were familiar to his mind. And it is here especially worthy of observation that he derived the utmost solace and refreshment from the many portions of sacred writ which he had committed to *memory* in the last years of his life. The account he gave of this matter was as follows: "When I arrived at the age of forty-six, beginning to feel the failure of sight, I was struck with the idea that I might perhaps become wholly unable to read the sacred volume; under this impression I set myself to learn by heart whole *chapters,* and even *books,* which I rehearsed in my solilitude, whether at home or abroad, in set portions every day. So that in the course of a week I had repeated all I had learned, and by this means retained what I had previously acquired, and continued adding something to the store! "I cannot describe," said he, "the pleasure and advantage I have derived from this practice, especially since I have been laid on this sick-bed: I am now *incapable* of reading much, but I have found a rich fund of consolation in recurring to those parts

of the scriptures which I have treasured up in my memory." The word of Christ dwelt in him richly, and as he delighted much in the law of the Lord, so he meditated therein day and night. From a personal experience of the benefit accruing from such a familiar acquaintance with the Bible, he enjoined it upon his dear children, and recommended to his young friends in general to copy his example in this respect, only to begin much earlier than he did. After expressing his kind wishes for a young gentleman for whom he entertained a great esteem, he sent this message to him by a mutual friend who was about to visit him in a remote part of the country: "Charge him to store his memory with the scriptures, to begin immediately, for now is the time to set about it. Had I begun at his age I should now have been able to recite that blessed book from beginning to end." It is believed this message from the lips of a dying christian had its full weight; and has led to the adoption of the salutary practice it intended to recommend. Our departed brother could repeat perfectly a great part of the

Psalms of David; many chapters of the prophecies, and of the gospels, and several entire epistles of the New Testament. In one of those nights which he passed without sleep, he informed an old friend who kept watch at his bed-side that he had repeated the Epistle to the Hebrews from the first to the eleventh chapter inclusive; and he believed, without the omission of a single verse.

"To one of his children, the sabbath before his departure, he said with a firm tone, "My dear child I thought I should not have seen you again, I expected this would have been the first sabbath I should have spent in eternity, but God's time is best." On one of his friends enquiring if he were comfortable, he replied, "Yes, and if I had but my tongue," (his mouth being in such a state as to render speaking exquisitely painful,) "I would let you all know how happy I am; I am looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God my Saviour." At one season he observed, "Here I am waiting for my change—what a mercy! If I were a heathen I could not wait so." To his medical at-

tendant, who, aware of his unconquerable aversion to medicine, had with much kindness administered as little as the case would admit, he said, "I cannot take any more, let me go as easily as you can;" and then lifting up his eyes to heaven added, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace for I trust mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Not long before his dismission he used the following verses with a reference to his own circumstances—

"My fluttering pulse and falt'ring breath
Announce the near approach of death;
How can I meet, dear Saviour, say,
The last dark, dismal, cloudiest day?

Look to my cross, the sov'reign cure
For *all the ills* thou can'st endure;
Whence dart the beams of endless day,
And clouds and darkness flee away."

"He was blest with the continuance of his intellectual faculties till within two or three hours of his dissolution, when the powers of nature being completely exhausted the unfettered spirit was allowed to take its joyful flight to that blissful region where the inhabitant saith not "I am sick;" the people that dwell

therein having been forgiven their iniquities. Contemplating his undisturbed and tranquil exit we may truly and emphatically say, "the end of that man was peace."

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* An interesting account of her is written by the Rev. George Clayton.

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